NEW MASSES

MAY 17, 1938 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

America Can Halt Japan

By Paul G. McManus

Saturday Night in Jersey City

By Paul Cox

Chamberlain's War Pact

By R. Palme Dutt

How Wisconsin Views La Follette

By Harold Douglas

Out With Their Teeth!

By Robert Forsythe

"The United Front" by Georgi Dimitrov

Reviewed by V. J. McGill

Cartoons by Gropper, Ned Hilton, Mackey, Crockett Johnson, Del, and Others

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

THE full text of our Madison Square Garden debate, May 4, between Earl Browder and Frederick J. Libby on "Should the United States Government Join in Concerted Action Against the Fascist States?" will be published next week as a special supplement. The debate, as those who were present know, was a distinct success. We are especially pleased because more than 1,500 subscriptions to NEW MASSES were sold, and wish to express our thanks to the several hundred friends who helped in selling these, particularly to the veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. Not to forget our former business manager, William Browder, who opened the proceedings with a speech about the magazine.

Other outstanding features of next week's issue:

The first of two articles by Ruth McKenney on the Communist Party.

A first-hand account of wrecking in the Soviet Union, by John Sutton, an American chemist, recently returned after six-and-a-half years' work there.

Answers to the anonymous author of "Why I Am Not an Active Communist" in this week's issue.

Granville Hicks' book, *I Like America,* is being published by Modern Age Books next week. Our bureau has been flooding us with clippings about Hicks' appointment to Harvard. Newspapers in every part of the country took note of the story. The Associated Press pictures of Hicks in his Grafton, N. Y., home were widely reprinted, and the A.P. feature service put him into its "What is your News I. Q.?" questionnaire, thus: "Identify this writer whose appointment to a Harvard fellowship brought protests from patriotic societies," with the answer on page so-and-so.

On Wed., May 18, Hicks will deliver the final lecture in the "Crux of the News" series by NEW MASSES editors. He will speak on the "American Literary Scene—1938" at Steinway Hall, 113 W. 57 St., New York City, at 8:30 p.m.

We are trying an experiment in promotion, by means of a series of twelve ads in the New York Sunday *Times* book section. This is supposed to be a self-liquidating project, and if only one-twelfth of one percent of the readers of the Sunday *Times* do respond with a trial subscription, the liquidation of the cost will be accomplished — and we shall have widened our public substantially. We mention it so that our readers who notice the ads in the Sunday *Times* and wonder how we've got so flush will understand the situation; incidentally, they might take occasion to draw their non-reader friends' attention to the ads.

A sailor writes us:

"Each time the ship returns to New York I bring aboard the dozen or so NEW MASSES which accumulated during the last trip. They are pretty popular among the crew, and are well read regardless of their age.

"Last night as we were going through the Dardanelles on the run from Istanbul to Fathieh, Turkey, we heard the radio reports of Hitler's occupation of Austria. And today, Sunday, we have been fighting all the wars since 1900, throwing money on the deck to give authority to our arguments. This is not to say the seamen differ on essential points of world politics, for, as you probably know, the American seaman is pretty well aware when it comes to politics. N. M. is doing a lot of good on this tub just the same. During our arguments I often hear some of the boys bringing up facts which they found in N. M., and I know damn well where the dope comes from, because I always read the magazine first, then leave them in the mess room.

"Last trip, by the way, I took up a collection for Spain. It totaled $35, contributed by about eighteen guys, which I think is very good. So, be good guys and slack away on a few more of your N. M., and I will see you after the payoff."

"Workman, Workman," by S. Funaroff, in last week's issue, should have had the following acknowledgment: "Suggested by the poem *Paix Sociale* by André Spire, the French poet."

What's What

THE League of American Writers, the Poetry Society of America, the Writers' Alliance, and over a hundred individual authors including Padraic Colum, Clifton Fadiman, Henry Goddard Leach, Lewis Mumford, Upton Sinclair, John Steinbeck, Jean Starr Untermeyer, and Mark Van Doren, have endorsed a call for a conference to be held May 22nd at the Hotel Pennsylvania to determine the desires of American writers in regard to the creation of a Federal Bureau of Fine Arts.

The conference, which is sponsored by the newly created Writers' Committee for a Federal Bureau of Fine Arts, will specifically discuss the Coffee-Pepper Bill now pending in Congress, with a view of suggesting changes and amendments to fulfill the needs of writers. This conference constitutes the first step by writers as a group to exert their influence behind a suitable Bureau of Fine Arts.

The Writers' Committee for a Federal Bureau of Fine Arts consists of Wellington Roe, chairman; Jenny Ballou, Nora Benjamin, Malcolm Cowley, Henry Hart, Marjorie Fischer, George Seldes, and Donald Ogden Stewart.

NEW MASSES benefit parties still go on. The best report we've had recently comes from a town in Southern California (not Los Angeles or Hollywood) where a party was held at which 150 subscriptions were secured.

Our financial campaign is by no means over. As our cash-register box on page 11 shows, we have received $16,798.31 from 6,938 friends. We will continue reporting week-to-week results until the necessary quota of $20,000 has been raised.

We are anxious to secure as wide a distribution as possible for the text of the Browder-Libby debate. Our next week's issue, containing the debate section therefore, will be distributed at ten cents to organizations and individuals buying in quantities of ten or more.

Who's Who

PAUL G. MCMANUS is a Washington statistician who has written for NEW MASSES before. . . . R. Palme Dutt, author of *Fascism and Social Revolution* and *World Politics: 1918-36* and editor of the British *Labour Monthly,* will contribute a monthly article on European affairs to NEW MASSES. . . . Harold Douglas is a resident of Madison, Wis. . . . Paul Cox is a New York journalist who was assigned to cover the Jersey City meeting. . . . V. J. McGill is an editor of *Science & Society.* . . . David Ramsey is educational director of the International Fur Workers' Union. . . . Jack Conroy, author of *The Disinherited* and *A World to Win,* reviews books for the *Sunday Worker* and will edit the revived *Anvil.*

The painting, *Work for Scarecrows,* by Arthur Emptage, which was reproduced in last week's issue, along with the review of his one-man show at the A.C.A. Gallery, is also on exhibit at the American Artists' Congress show at Wanamaker's, reviewed in this issue by Elizabeth Noble.

Flashbacks

ON May 12, 1917 (the war was declared April 6) the Pennsylvania Board of Education issued statements authorizing the withdrawal of school children twelve years or older to work on the farms. On May 15 the National Association of Manufacturers declared the federal eight-hour law a menace to the country in that it threatened the manufacture of munitions. That same day the N.A.M. adopted another resolution urging that the President be given "authority to suspend for the period of the war all restrictive legislation which seriously threatens to cripple the capacity of national industry to perform its indispensable functions for national defense. On May 18 Southern senators began conferences looking toward the suspension of existing child-labor laws. ". . . Congress shall make no law abridging freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances" — thus Upton Sinclair read from the First Amendment to the Constitution at a banned Los Angeles meeting May 16, 1923. For defying the police by reading the Constitution, the famous author spent twenty-four hours in jail, incommunicado.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES
MAY 17, 1938

Soriano

America Can Halt Japan

By Paul G. McManus

THE difficulties the Japanese have been encountering in their war against China spotlights what singularly few people seem aware of: that the United States is in the strategic position of being able to cripple Japan's war machine by suddenly cutting off the supply of scrap needed in steel production. This may be illustrated by citing figures for Japan. In 1937 she produced roughly 5,300,000 tons of steel. In the manufacture of this tonnage, over 2,000,000 tons of scrap were used, of which the United States supplied 1,900,000 tons. Thus one-third of the raw material used in Japan's steel industry in 1937 was derived from American scrap. It can readily be seen that sudden stoppage of this flow would adversely affect Japan's ability to produce steel.

The foregoing represents the opinion of no individual. The figures cited are based upon official export statistics compiled monthly by United States government bodies. The paragraph as a whole is quoted almost literally from a recent speech by E. W. Pehrson, of the Metal Economics Division of the United States Bureau of Mines, before the trade organization of used-material dealers. It constitutes the most direct statement made, since Japan invaded China, of the vital role played in Japan's war economy by American industry.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Pehrson, who used Japan's crucial dependence upon American steel as an argument against the imposition of an embargo on further shipments of such strategic materials to Japan, considerably understated the importance of American steel to that country. A more accurate picture of the unique importance of American raw materials in Japanese steel and armament production is provided by the following facts:

During the last year exports of American pig iron to Japan have grown sensationally. The importance of pig iron, which is an alternative raw material to scrap in smelting steel, is that it is made to exact specifications and is of better quality than scrap. Most of the scrap which Japan has been buying in this country is derived from low grades of steel of the kind made many years ago: it is too high in carbon content to be reworked into steel durable enough to withstand the punishment to which military use subjects metals. Accordingly, the 400,000-odd tons of high-grade pig iron which Japan bought in the United States last year—almost entirely from subsidiaries of various Mellon holding companies—supplement the nearly 2,000,000 tons of scrap iron which she bought, in more than a quantitative sense: they were especially designed for use in military operations. And, illustrating the difference between these new grades of pig iron and the older types of metal available in scrap, Japan's 1938 purchases have thus far shown a strong partiality for pig iron. While her scrap buying is just about keeping pace with last year's record-breaking volume, she has sharply increased the rate at which she is ordering pig iron. And in the first three months of this year she has imported 172,500 tons of iron and steel (excluding scrap and machinery), compared with 88,000 tons in the same period in 1937 which already marked a sharp rise over previous years.

It is clear, therefore, that Japan's growing purchases of American pig iron not only increase her dependence upon American steel-making raw materials well above the 33 percent level specified by the Bureau of Mines official, but that they increase her dependence upon us for precisely the high-grade, arma-

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ment-type steels which Japan needs most desperately.

It is noteworthy, finally, that apart from India (where native pig iron, however, is too badly needed for exports to be very large), Japan has been able to buy pig iron in any quantity only in the United States. The one other source of supply—Soviet Russia—discontinued shipments to her last March, when the war-provoking alliance with Germany warned the world what to expect in China. Ironically, Germany has been too preoccupied with the iron shortage created by her own armament program to fill the breach made by the discontinued Soviet sales. This leaves the United States as Japan's chief pig-iron, as well as scrap, supplier, and it sharply increases Japan's wartime dependence upon the United States.

Nor is this the end of Japan's dependence upon the American steel industry. For the United States does more than supply Japan with strategic quantities and kinds of raw materials for her steel furnaces. She also supplies Japan with finished steel. Alongside the 5,300,000 tons of steel made in Japan, the million-odd tons of finished steel which she bought in this country in 1937 bulk large; especially since the American steels she buys are of a uniformly higher quality than her own low-grade production which is for the most part unfitted for the various engineering tasks required by armament work. As a recent article in the New York *Times* pointed out, these finished American steels are already alloyed with such metals as copper, aluminum, nickel, and molybdenum—which Japan lacks—and therefore her purchases of steel here relieve her of the necessity of buying these metals as well. It is a truism that steels not alloyed with these metals are inadequate for such military uses as aircraft and gun-making. Accordingly, the million tons of American steel alloys which she bought here in 1937 simultaneously relieve three desperate Japanese needs: they give her steel, they give her special steel for arms purposes, and they give her steel already processed with metals which she lacks.

Apart from the gruesome, merchants-of-death aspect involved in the sale of steel to Japan at this time—at a time when the United States, in lieu of collective economic measures to halt fascist aggression, is arming against the menace of a Japan further enriched and emboldened with North China—at least one other aspect of this traffic is of public interest. This is the matter of steel prices. Now Eugene Grace, who is the former head of the American Iron and Steel Institute and whose Bethlehem Steel Corp. has, in characteristic fashion, been securing the lion's share of the Japanese war business, has frequently protested that the price of steel cannot be reduced a dime below its present level. It is, of course, admitted that the high cost of steel has been one of the most potent factors delaying the progress of building in this country, interfering with the recovery of the auto industry, and otherwise injuring the New Deal's chances of restoring prosperity. But one may now question Mr. Grace's dogmatic assertion that the industry cannot reduce the cost of steel—to the American people. *For the cost has already been reduced to the Japanese militarists.* Reductions of $7.50 to $10 a ton were recently made in securing 1938's first big export order, of 100,000 tons of finished steel to be delivered at Japanese and Manchurian ports sometime during the first half of 1938. Steel is willing to cut its price to Japan, but not to American builders of New Deal-underwritten houses.

Returning to the ramifications of Japan's strategic dependence upon the American steel industry for her basic armaments ingredient, and passing over the matter of Japan's large-scale purchases of uniquely American steel-making machinery (our famous continuous rolling mills), it is interesting to consider the role of the Philippines in the Japanese steel industry. Now pig iron, scrap steel, and finished steel imports are going to be necessary for Japan so long as her own facilities for the production of pig iron remain as meager as hers still are. But if ever she is to attain steel-making independence, as she must strive to do if she fears the consequences of the American public becoming aware of the importance of American steel to her armament industry, she must develop her own sources of iron ore.

To replenish her empire's scanty supplies of iron ore, Japan has turned to the wealth of the Philippines. In 1937 Philippine iron-ore shipments to Japan averaged 50,000 tons a month; and now Japan is applying a German method, perfected by Krupp, for extracting iron ore from sandy deposits bearing a very low percentage of iron. It is upon this new German technique that Japan is basing her hope of one day becoming independent of foreign raw materials for her growing steel capacity. But characteristically, Japan's plan for attaining self-sufficiency itself involves a new form of dependence for a new type of raw material—this time iron ore—upon a new country, the Philippines, which is also a part of the American customs union.

A peculiar circumstance attaches to this aspect of the problem. Last summer, a series of articles published in the *Nation* on Japanese arms expansion disclosed the fact that the American authorities were contemplating the creation of a West Coast steel industry to feed projected shipyards and ordnance shops to be constructed there under our own Pacific armament program. This new steel project, it was further stated, would substitute Bonneville Dam's large supplies of electric power for coal—which is lacking on the coast—and its principal raw material would be iron ore, which could be transported cheaply enough from the Philippines. It is now known, moreover, that the Navy Department is finishing a very detailed study which has been in process for some time on the precise costs of production, technological problems, and so forth, which would be involved in the development of steel production on the coast; and announcement has already been made of the Navy's intention to construct shipyards there. Thus, it is clear that Japanese militarism, in feeding on Philippine iron ore, is interfering with the American program of national defense. It cannot be denied that deprivation of this iron ore would seriously interfere with the naval-expansion program which this country has undertaken as an alternative to a positive peace program through collective security. It is clearly not in the public interest for further sales of steel, and especially of Philippine iron ore, to be made to Japan.

In this connection, an interesting precedent has already been established in Australia. Early in 1937, Japan had arranged to secure large quantities of ore—eventually, she hoped, at the rate of a million tons a year, from the Australian island of Koolan. At great cost, running into six figures (in dollars), the Chicago engineering firm of Brassert's—which is now building the great Goering steel works in Germany as well as the Corby works in England, and which has intimate industrial connections in Japan—provided mining and conveying equipment able to load ore at the rapid rate of 1,000 tons an hour. Since then, however, Japan's depredations in China have caused Australia to increase her arms budget. And now Australia has given notice that she at least acknowledges the gravity of the menace which has compelled her to tax her people for purposes of war preparations. Over the protests of the Australian and foreign interests concerned in the exploitation of Japan's iron-ore concession, the federal government is forbidding further exports of iron ore "on the ground that a national issue is involved."

It is clear that this action creates a precedent with which no American advocate of peace can quarrel. But it does focus attention upon the basic issue which our Neutrality Act ignores; and it shows why our Neutrality Act has so signally failed to halt the aggressions of the fascist powers, and to prevent American materials from aiding such aggressions. For our Neutrality Act deals with munitions, with guns and bullets and the like. This is dramatic, and doubtless its purpose was originally to prevent American arms firms from profiteering from war. But the inescapable fact is that the powers which have been making war need no American munitions. They possess ample facilities for making their own ammunition and ordnance; it is the outraged defendants—China, Ethiopia, Spain—which are deficient in munitions plants. What the aggressors want are the basic ingredients of munitions making—steel, metals, machinery—and these they are able to obtain in abundance from the United States without violating our Neutrality Act. Witness Japan's purchases of steel with which to make munitions, while over China's head hangs our well-meant Neutrality Act which, if it were invoked, would penalize Japan not at all, while it would prevent China from buying the means of self-defense here.

Accordingly, the Australian action of in-

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cluding basic natural resources, such as iron ore, in the list of war materials sets a valuable precedent for that growing body of American opinion which would like to see our Neutrality Act altered so that it would in fact prevent aggressor nations from using American industry and natural resources as their behind-the-lines means of offense.

Other facts lend additional weight to the argument for an embargo against Japan. Japan's upbuilding of her navy for aggressive purposes is being facilitated by the enormous quantities of high-grade American steels which her arsenals consume: for example, Japan is now trying to buy 200-300 mm. steel tubes in this country for special shipbuilding use, and tubes of the required size and quality are not made in Japan. On the other hand, every ton of steel we sell Japan multiplies the already enormous tax bill which is being imposed upon the American people to pay for our own arms program. It cannot be claimed that Japan is using American steels for commercial purposes: over four hundred restrictions have been imposed, since the outbreak of the war, against the commercial use of steel. Therefore, a clear-cut case exists for putting an end to a trade which threatens to cost the American people dearly in dollars and, if the present trend is not halted, in life as well.

Nor can it be argued that Germany and England might singly or together provide Japan with the steel of which such a changed national policy on our part would deprive her. Both countries are suffering from an acute steel shortage. In Germany, even arms projects must register with the authorities and pass through a long waiting list before steel can be delivered. Only the lack of foreign exchange prevents Germany from making as heavy purchases in the United States as Japan is making. She can assist Japan, in this respect, by making available her own *ersatz* furnaces for smelting steel from low-grade ores. And even these ores, as we have seen, involve a new form of Japanese dependence upon American strategic resources—Philippine iron ore. Britain, too, cannot serve as a source of steel, for Britain has been vying with Japan for first place as a purchaser of the American steels which her own arms program requires.

Thus, the statement of the American official that Japan's arms industry would be crippled if she were deprived of American steel is actually conservative. The dependence of Japan upon every type and grade of American steel and steel raw material, as well as the inability of any other country to duplicate the service we are rendering her, leaves not the shadow of a doubt that Japan could continue neither to make war in China nor to arm in Manchuria for future wars if she could no longer count upon American steel to buttress her warmaking plant. And if America alone could play so decisive a role in halting Japanese aggression, how much more effective would an embargo imposed jointly by the principal peace-seeking powers be. If the United States would take the lead, other governments might very well be moved to adopt a similar policy.

Del

"We'll yank 'em all! Nurse, prepare the patient."

The most eloquent admission that the United States, and principally the United States, is arming Japan has come from Y. Aikawa, the Japanese auto and mining magnate who is now industrial czar of Manchuria. Aikawa is coming to America soon to seek $300,000,000 in industrial credits from American steel and machinery companies. He has admitted on a number of occasions that it is only in the United States that Japan can hope to obtain the large quantities of capital goods that she needs, and that already Japan's new, modern plant is so completely oriented toward the use of American equipment that she has no choice save to come here for the rest of the materials she needs.

And, as it is with steel, so it is with other metals, with machinery and with oil. Fully 80 percent of Japan's oil imports last year (and almost all of her annual consumption is imported) came from California. This year shipments of California's crude oil are thus far three times greater than in 1937. And even if Japan succeeds in obtaining a few million gallons of crude oil in Mexico, her refineries are incapable of processing any great quantity of oil into the high-grade fuels needed by her aircraft and fleet. Altogether, therefore, as government officials are beginning to admit and as Japanese officials have admitted for some time, American steel and other materials provide the crutch upon which Japan's sick and war-infested economy is limping. And as public knowledge spreads that America's own expensive armament program is the result of that policy which permits American industry to arm Japan—and because American industry is now being asked to provide the Japanese military machine with $300,000,000 worth of credits—insistent demand is bound to arise that this traffic in death cease. When it is stopped, the end of Japan's aggression will be in sight. Until it is stopped, the United States will stand convicted before the world of being the supplier of the Japanese warmakers.

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Chamberlain's War Pact

By R. Palme Dutt

LONDON, APRIL 26.

IN the name of peace to prepare war is an old and familiar maxim of British foreign policy. When the Anglo-French entente was established in 1904, it was widely welcomed on the left as a triumph of peace. Even the Anglo-Czarist agreement of 1907 was widely acclaimed as a triumph of appeasement and the reconciliation of an ancient antagonism. Events were to show that these were definite steps in the preparation of the war of 1914.

Today Chamberlain has signed a pact with Mussolini. The Anglo-Italian pact is being widely acclaimed as a triumph of appeasement. This pact, which is signed in the blood of Spanish democracy, which openly extends its blessing to fascist aggression in Spain and Abyssinia, is even being blessed by organs of the left in Britain as a victory for peace. Thus the liberal organ, the *News-Chronicle,* writes in its issue of April 25:

> Nobody can question the immediate benefits of the Rome agreement so far as the immediate peace of the Mediterranean is concerned. It has occasioned a sense of relief which is felt beyond the shores of the middle sea. The agreement does more than ease a dangerous tension. It calls a truce to a duel—diplomatic, political, and strategic—which has been none the less deadly in earnest because the two protagonists happened to be at peace.

A very ugly disillusionment is awaiting those who see in this pact of alliance with fascism a victory for peace.

The main significance of the Anglo-Italian pact of April 16 is not to be found simply from a study of its terms.

On the face of it, Chamberlain would appear to have made a very poor bargain with Mussolini; and on this basis there are many critics who denounce his blindness, innocence, and simplicity in letting himself be thus outmaneuvered by Mussolini.

Chamberlain has given away all that is immediately important for Italy. He has given away Abyssinia, and undertaken to secure recognition of the Italian conquest of Abyssinia at the League of Nations Council meeting on May 9. He has given away Spain, and for the first time openly recognized and approved the Italian aggression in Spain by accepting with "gratification" Italian promises for the withdrawal of troops after "the termination of the Spanish civil war." He has recognized Italian rights to unrestricted wartime use of the Suez Canal. He has recognized Italian equality in the Mediterranean.

In return he has secured entirely empty promises from Mussolini, whose value has been shown in what happened to the Anglo-Italian "gentlemen's agreement" of January 1937, immediately after its signing. Mussolini has promised not to set up any permanent domination in Spain or the Balearic Islands, when in fact the Italian fascists and the Nazis are busy entrenching themselves both economically and strategically. He has promised to give over his propaganda, which can in any case be turned on or off at the tap according to future requirements. He has promised to diminish his troops in Libya by half; but no number is stated, and there is no pledge not to increase them again. He has promised not to conscript Africans in his conquered territory for "military duties other than local policing and territorial defense"—which covers all the conscription and military training that he is in fact carrying out.

That Mussolini interprets the pact as in no sense a restriction on his warlike aims, but an assistance to them, was ostentatiously demonstrated in his speech to the Italian Senate on March 30. At the very moment when terms were being drawn up and agreed on in principle, he was proclaiming for the near future a "third great victorious campaign of the empire" (i.e., the third after Abyssinia and Spain) and a new "war of short duration" of an "offensive" character, which would bring into play the entire military, naval, and air forces of Italy.

The theory that Chamberlain signed such an apparently disadvantageous treaty with Italy out of sheer innocence, naïveté, and inability to understand the issues, although often repeated in left circles in Britain, is too naïve a view of British diplomacy, which was not born yesterday and knows very well how to drive a hard bargain when it chooses. This was illustrated in the contrasting character and tone of Chamberlain's negotiations with Ireland at the same time as the negotiations with Italy.

The alternative theory is accordingly put forward that Britain has been so anxious to reach this agreement with Italy, at almost any cost, in order to detach Italy from Germany and rebuild a British-French-Italian "Stresa" front against Hitler as the main enemy.

This theory, also, will not hold water. The old Stresa aspirations have been indulged in by certain sections, represented by Vansittart, who was, however, thrust into the background before these negotiations opened. But these are not the dominant sections represented by Chamberlain, Londonderry, Montagu Norman, and the Cliveden group, who are precisely the pro-Hitler group.

In 1934 Italy could still stand up to Germany, and dispatch its divisions to the Brenner Pass when Hitler attempted his coup in Austria by the murder of Dollfuss. This was the basis of the Stresa alignment in the first half of 1935. But this is now past history. The relation of forces has changed. In the Berlin-Rome axis the dominant role is that of Hitler. When Germany annexed Austria by military invasion in March 1938, Italy, beset with difficulties in Abyssinia and Spain and the economic situation at home, could only acquiesce. German troops on the Brenner hold Northern Italy in their power. Italy is becoming a semi-colony in the Nazi orbit. This is symbolically demonstrated in the immediate following of the Anglo-Italian pact by Hitler's visit to Rome on May 2.

For Britain, also, the Anglo-Italian pact is complementary to the Berlin-Rome axis. Chamberlain is pressing forward the negotiations for an agreement with Hitler at the same time as he reaches the agreement with Mussolini.

> The German government has been kept fully informed of the negotiations throughout, so that there can be no question of anything but harmony and collaboration between the three powers. (London *Times,* April 4.)

The Anglo-Italian pact is a step toward the "British-German-Italian alliance" openly designated by Hitler already in *Mein Kampf* as the aim and pivot of Nazi foreign policy.

The reality must be faced. *The Anglo-Italian pact means the alignment of Britain with the fascist alliance.*

It is not a question of Britain making concessions to fascism as to a potential enemy. It is rather a question of Britain coming to the rescue of fascism, to strengthen and consolidate it against the rising democratic and popular forces and its own inner economic and social embarrassments. The extreme difficulties of Italy in Abyssinia, where reports show the increasing success of Abyssinian resistance, and the consolidation of the Spanish people's army and its initial victories at the beginning of the year, made urgently necessary, from the standpoint of British reaction, the agreement with Italy, the open recognition of Italian sovereignty in Abyssinia, and the open approval of unlimited Nazi and Italian reënforcements of artillery and aircraft to Franco in the hope of crushing Spanish democracy by the sheer weight of hostile material resources in the face of their own deprivation of arms.

British financial circles are working to follow up the Anglo-Italian pact by a loan to Italy of, it is reported, £20,000,000 or £30,000,000. Mussolini must at all costs be saved. Mussolini is able to "blackmail" Britain, not through his strength, but through his weakness.

The agreement with Mussolini is, for Britain, a step to the agreement with Hitler, for which negotiations are now being pressed forward. And this in turn is a step to the continuous British aim of the four-power

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pact, with a weakened France as a prisoner, detached from the Soviet Union and its Eastern commitments, and so to the isolation of the Soviet Union.

Simultaneously with the Anglo-Italian negotiations, the British reactionary offensive has been carried forward in France, with the assistance of French finance-capital and profascist reaction. Through financial and diplomatic pressure, through the offensive on the franc, through the paralysis of France in relation to Spain and the building up of the fascist strategic threat to France on the Pyrenees, Britain works to weaken France, to break up the People's Front, and to bring into existence a reactionary government in France, subservient to Britain and to fascism.

The reactionary aims of Chamberlain's foreign policy, and his ultimate war aims, should now be clear to all; and there is no excuse for misunderstanding them. The proceedings of the last Soviet trial throw the clearest light on the realities of British foreign policy and the whole international situation. It is urgently necessary that all sections of the left should, without exception, learn to face these serious realities while there is still time, instead of indulging in frivolous speculations and moralizings which only show suicidal blindness to the character of the struggle against fascism.

Chamberlain's war plans can still be defeated. Spanish democracy is not broken, but is amazing the whole world by its resistance, and thereby winning us time in Britain and America to see that they get the arms which would ensure their speedy victory. Abyssinia is still fighting. China is winning victories that are throwing Japan into difficulties. At the League of Nations Council on May 9, Chamberlain may not have the easy passage for which he is hoping. The French People's Front is not broken, but increasing in strength of support; the French government is not yet in the pocket of Britain; and increasing forces in France are recognizing the necessity of a stronger policy. The Franco-Soviet pact is not broken.

In Britain opposition is rising to Chamberlain's policy. The critical days of March, after Germany's seizure of Austria, saw the highest level of mass demonstrations and anger against the "National" government since its formation, which found its reflection in a revolt among the government's own supporters. At that critical moment Chamberlain himself believed that his days were numbered. The failure of the National Council of Labor to lead the movement, and the coöperation of Citrine with Chamberlain, saved Chamberlain's skin. But the movement of opposition goes forward. Although the Labor Party Executive has issued a manifesto denouncing the people's front, immediately after its issue the Coöperative Conference, representing over five million workers (including most of the two million workers in the Labor Party), carried a resolution for the United Peace Alliance or combination of all democratic and peace forces under the leadership of labor, to defeat Chamberlain and return a people's government which would carry out a positive peace policy. The All-Parties Emergency Conference for Spain on April 23, called under the auspices of the leaders of the Labor Party, the Coöperative Party and the Liberal Party, the chairman of the Trades Union Congress, Communist signatories, and prominent democratic and peace representatives, and marshaling with only a few days of organization over 1,800 delegates from trade unions, labor parties, coöperatives, Communist branches, liberal and peace organizations, was a demonstration of the will for a people's front. That such a people's front could defeat Chamberlain is widely admitted in the government press, which praises the Labor Party Executive for its prudent and patriotic opposition to the proposal. The campaign is undoubtedly gaining ground. On the outcome of this inner struggle depends the immediate future of British politics, the continuance or defeat of Chamberlain's "National" government and the consequent decision whether Britain shall be ranged with the fascist powers or with the democratic powers.

Opinion in the United States can play an important part in assisting this critical developing fight for a peace front in Britain by working to strengthen the advance of the United States toward policies of coöperation for the collective maintenance of peace. Every sign of such a move on the part of the United States is a blow in the face of the Chamberlain government and helps to expose its reactionary warmaking policy; every vacillation or hesitation, or expression of isolationism, is eagerly used by Chamberlain to justify his own policy. The fight of the working class and of the democratic and peace forces in Britain and the United States is more than ever a common one, in which each side can powerfully help the other.

J. Bartlett

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William Gropper

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Labor's Foreign Policy

THE blow to Premier Neville Chamberlain and his entire policy of aiding and abetting the fascist aggressors, administered by the Lichfield constituency in the May 5 parliamentary by-election is of considerably greater significance than the tory press here and in England cares to admit.

As in West Fulham several weeks previously, the Lichfield by-election was fought definitely on the issue of England's foreign policies. And, as in West Fulham, the tory policies, despite the government's strenuous efforts, suffered a resounding defeat. C. C. Poole, railway clerk, on the Labor Party ticket, was elected to Parliament in what was heretofore a Chamberlain stronghold.

In the name of the British masses, the Lichfield voters proclaimed to the entire world their condemnation of Chamberlain's open and secret betrayals of Ethiopia, Spain, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and China, of his nefarious efforts to undermine the *Front Populaire* in France, explode the Franco-Soviet pact, and isolate the most valiant defender of peace and democracy throughout the world—the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. The British masses have issued an unequivocal warning: "Don't rely on the policies, treaties, promises, and guarantees of a government that does not express preponderant public opinion. A government of this sort is doomed; the British people will repudiate its commitments."

This warning has brought cheer to the democratic forces, dismay to the war-plotting fascist dictators. It confutes isolationists like Bruce Bliven of the *New Republic* who oppose the struggle for collective security on the ground that one cannot rely on perfidious Albion, as if the orientation of the advocates of collective security is toward the tory governments and not toward the democratic masses.

When the advocates of collective security urge the United States to take the initiative in proposing collective action for peace and "quarantining the aggressors," they look to the support of the British masses who will either force Chamberlain to comply with the people's wishes or will elect a more responsive government.

"We can reasonably expect," said Earl Browder in his recent NEW MASSES debate with Frederick J. Libby, "that with such a profound change in the relation of world forces (if the United States took the lead on this question) the British Labor Party would shake off its present paralysis of fear, and actively rally the peace-loving majority of the English people behind it."

That was said on the eve of the Lichfield by-election! Browder's faith is fully vindicated. Now to further encourage the democratic forces and thus assure the victory of peace, we in the United States must do our share, energetically, and without further delay.

Lift the Embargo!

THE struggle for collective security in this country is not chimerical. It is a vital reality in our national life and is winning support in ever-widening circles of our population.

Last week, the *Nation* published results of its poll on the question of isolationism versus collective security. "The lists of persons to whom questionnaires were sent were carefully chosen to avoid bias." The figures in the *Nation* exceeded our most sanguine expectations—the ratio was six to one for collective security! Out of a total of 9,263 signed ballots, the *Nation* points out, only 1,493 subscribed to the general isolationist program which some of our Washington friends have declared represents the sentiment of the country. Among the unsigned ballots the proportion was about the same.

Similarly, the National Lawyers' Guild poll showed a six-to-one majority in favor of the use of economic measures to enforce the Kellogg-Briand pact, as well as of revising the Neutrality Act so as to allow for a distinction between the aggressors and their victims.

The Nye resolution calling for the lifting of the arms embargo on Spain, which fits perfectly into the collective-security program, is gaining the enthusiastic backing of thousands of believers in democracy. Groups of prominent citizens, scientists, writers, trade-union, church, and liberal leaders have been converging on Washington during the last few weeks for the purpose of urging the repeal of the disgraceful, unjust, and reactionary embargo. The administration ought to stop carrying water on both shoulders and throw its support behind the Nye resolution.

Across the Border

SHORTLY after Carl von Ossietzky was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1935, Hitler decreed that no German should henceforth accept any Nobel prize. The Nazi overlord might have specified Germans who were in exile, like Thomas Mann and Albert Einstein, and Germans who were in concentration camps, like Carl von Ossietzky. For none but a "notorious traitor" to the "New Germany" is likely to make a contribution to peace and science and culture which will meet with world praise. No Nazi supporter will have the opportunity of rejecting a Nobel award. Indeed, the peace prize went to von Ossietzky precisely because he clung to his pacifist ideals in the dark prisons of the world's most belligerent power. Von Ossietzky had served in the World War, and he never forgot its horrors. He devoted his life to the cause of peace and liberty. Now he is dead, a victim at forty-eight of the unutterably brutal system of repression which prevails in his beloved homeland. His tragic illness was embittered by the terrors of Spandau, Sonnenburg, Papenburg, and those other torture chambers which are the fitting monuments to Nazi culture. Von Ossietzky was not permitted to "complain" to the international group of journalists by whom he was visited. But the world will neither misinterpret nor forget his eloquent sentence: "A man speaks with a hollow voice across the border."

The Portent of Florida

THE bi-partisan tory forces that are gunning for the New Deal have received their first serious setback in many weeks in the victory of Senator Claude Pepper in the Florida Democratic primaries and in the successful blasting of the Wages and Hours Bill out of the House Rules Committee. Pepper won in emphatic fashion, his vote surpassing the combined total of his three opponents. There was only one issue in the Florida election: the New Deal and all that it implies. That issue was made by the reactionaries themselves who insisted on regarding the Florida balloting as something of a national touchstone, with the chief anti-New Deal candidate, Representative J. Mark Wilcox, cast in the role of standard bearer, Senator Pepper, save for his opposition to the Anti-Lynching Bill, has been a consistent supporter of New Deal policies. Representative Wilcox has with equal consistency fought Supreme Court reform, the Reorganization Bill, wages-and-hours legislation, and other progressive measures. Thus the issue between them was clearly drawn. And faced with this choice, the people of Florida—many

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of whom, as a result of the repeal of the poll tax, were able to vote for the first time—acted in unequivocal fashion.

Arthur Krock of the New York *Times,* who received one of the Pulitzer prizes for his distinguished services to American reaction, has been at some pains to explain away the Pepper victory on the facile and demagogic grounds of corruption of the electorate with federal-relief funds. When big business pours millions of dollars into the campaign chests of its political stooges, that is an expression of purest patriotism and devotion to democracy. But when the government keeps human beings from starving, and those human beings endorse a policy which keeps them from starving, that is corruption and a threat to democracy! Nor does Krock bother to tell his readers that even if all of the 32,500 persons on W.P.A. had voted against Senator Pepper, he would still have won by a comfortable margin.

If the results in Florida are even approximately an index of national sentiment, it is clear that the American people are behind the President's recovery program and his other reform measures, and want the kind of Congress that will carry them out. The power of reaction to confuse large sections of the population and frustrate the will of the people should, however, not be underestimated. A solid front of all progressive forces is urgent in the struggles now developing.

The Wages-Hours Bill

THE victory of Senator Pepper had a remarkably tonic effect on those Southern members of the House of Representatives who were somewhat sluggish in regard to the Wages and Hours Bill. But the Florida primaries were not the only factor responsible for the unprecedented spectacle of 218 congressmen crowding each other to affix their signatures to the petition to free the bill from the stranglehold of the Rules Committee. The aggressive leadership given by President Roosevelt in this fight undoubtedly contributed greatly to bringing the faint-hearted into line. And even more important was the fact that both the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O. supported the bill and actively campaigned for it. This was in happy contrast to the exhibition given by the A. F. of L. hierarchy during the special session of Congress when their efforts succeeded in defeating the original Wages and Hours Bill. The decisive role played by united labor support is conceded by no less a tory spokesman than David Lawrence, who wrote in Saturday's New York *Sun:*

> It is significant that, until opposition of the A. F. of L. was worn away, the measure was blocked, hence proving . . . that the labor groups have a majority of both Houses and can put through or block any bills affecting their welfare.

This statement bears directly not only on the outlook for passage of the Wages and Hours Bill at this session, but on the Roosevelt recovery program and on the congressional elections. A united labor movement, aligning with it the farmers and urban middle classes, can defeat the bi-partisan tory coalition and wrest America's future from the hands of the fascist-minded men of Wall Street.

As the Fascists Conspire

THE official salaams and genuflections of Hitler's visit to Mussolini culminated in a preview of what the agreement between them means for the rest of the world: the elaborate sham battle and aerial bombings which Mussolini staged for the edification of the Führer. These military maneuvers offered a glimpse into the grim reality behind all the rococo oratory and heroic gestures with which fascism masks its conspiracies. The inspired newspaper stories concerning Mussolini's "abandonment" of the Berlin axis have not survived the light of day. Undoubtedly Mussolini's relative position in the axis has been weakened in recent months, but his very dependence on Hitler has for the present strengthened their alliance and prepared the way for new aggressions, with Hitler magnanimously relinquishing claim to the Germans in the Italian Tyrol in return for a free hand in Central and Eastern Europe.

The events in Rome are the sequel to the British-Italian deal and the prelude to the new agreement that the Chamberlain government is seeking to negotiate with the Nazi regime. For, as R. Palme Dutt points out in this issue of NEW MASSES: "The agreement with Mussolini is, for Britain, a step to the agreement with Hitler. . . . And this in turn is a step to the continuous British aim of the four-power pact, with a weakened France as a prisoner, detached from the Soviet Union and its Eastern commitments, and so to the isolation of the Soviet Union." The noose around France is being drawn tighter. British finance-capital, in coöperation with French finance-capital, has again torpedoed the franc. The new devaluation decreed by the Daladier government may provide a temporary breathing-spell, but it creates the danger of further increases in already mounting living-costs and tends to anchor French foreign policy even more firmly to the pro-fascist Chamberlain machinations. Today more than ever does the Labor Party hold the key to the future. The creation of a People's Front in England, collaborating with the French People's Front and the democratic forces in all countries, would quickly change the entire situation and break up the developing Hitler-Mussolini-Chamberlain war alliance which increasingly threatens the peace of the world.

The Two Fronts

SMALL GAINS by both the rejuvenated loyalist troops and the fascist invaders during the past week have not materially altered the situation in Spain. The Franco drive down the Mediterranean coast toward Castellon, a town which was considered doomed only two weeks ago, has been advancing at a snail's pace. General José Miaja's government troops have, in fact, succeeded in somewhat relieving the pressure on Castellon by recapturing territory which has given the government domination of the Alcala de Chivert-Cuevas de Vinroma road from which the rebels have been attempting to push down to Castellon. Only lack of material—for which our own Neutrality Act is in part responsible—prevents the Negrín government from launching a large-scale offensive to drive the invaders out of their coast positions.

In China another stalemate has developed on the South Shantung front as the war has entered its eleventh month. After stopping the second Japanese offensive, designed to avenge the Taierhchwang defeat and capture Suchow, the Chinese struck back and for several days made spectacular advances. Their drive from the North thus brought to a halt, three Japanese columns are now attempting to strike at Suchow and the east-west Lung-Hai Railway from the South, but have made only slight gains. Meanwhile at home the Japanese political crisis continues, as evidenced by the quiet invocation of sections of the fascist National Mobilization Law despite Premier Konoye's promise as recently as March that this law would not be utilized in connection with the Chinese war. The serious situation facing Japan both at the front and at home emphasizes the point made by Paul G. McManus in his article in this issue of NEW MASSES, that the United States is in the privileged position of being able to end Tokyo's criminal war and its threat to world peace by embargoing shipments of basic war-materials to Japan.

Hague Advertises

ONLY a mile of water separates the two cities, New York, the most liberal metropolis in the country, and Jersey City, which is rapidly becoming a byword for reaction. In five minutes the Hudson Tubes will whirl you from lower New York to

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Boss Hague's feudal domain—and in less than five minutes Hague's thugs, in uniform and out of uniform, will send you back to civilization, a mass of bleeding bruises, and lucky to be alive.

Boss Hague has been advertising the fact that Jersey City is a walled town. Last Saturday night he put on the biggest publicity stunt of all, participated in by some thousands of his jobholders, a lot of drunks and riffraff, and all the cops that Jersey City could muster. Well, it was a great success as far as advertising goes; it made the front page everywhere; but it is extremely doubtful that Boss Hague will not find he has overplayed his hand, and by a long way.

For it is one thing to haul Jeff Burkitt off to jail for six months for trying to speak in Journal Square, and to forcibly deport Norman Thomas for trying the same thing, with only a broken head for a photographer or so. It is another thing for the mayor of a so-called American city to do what Hague did last Saturday night: organize a huge mob for the openly avowed purpose of killing two United States Congressmen who had announced they would exercise their Constitutional right of free speech. That's the kind of advertising that attracts a little too much attention. Jersey City is already a stench in the nostrils of every freedom-loving American who reads the papers. President Roosevelt can scarcely ignore much longer the fact that the man responsible for the regime of terror and brutality in Jersey City is one of the vice-chairmen of the Democratic Party. The La Follette committee cannot much longer exclude Jersey City from the "MUST" column on its list of places to investigate. Hague has challenged the entire concept of democracy in the United States. He can't win.

Reaction's Simple Program

THERE is an almost primitive simplicity about the resolutions adopted by the annual convention of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States. They are devoid of subtleties, barren of all cajolery. There is only the stark, monotonous repetition of a single thought-pattern: give big business a free hand, scuttle all social reform. With the country in the grip of a serious economic crisis, the only program that the economic royalists have to offer is—Hooverism. The center of attack throughout the convention was the National Labor Relations Act. Senator Burke, leader of Wall Street's congressional "goon squad," opened the assault with a speech in which he characterized the act as "Public Enemy Number One." William S. Knudsen, president of General Motors, followed up with an attack on the Labor Relations Act, the C.I.O., and the United Automobile Workers, and called for the outlawing of sitdown strikes. Assorted other speakers sniped at what is presumably the law of the land, and the whole was capped with a resolution which advocated a congressional investigation and then, without waiting for the investigation, demanded repeal or drastic revision of the act.

Other resolutions opposed federal wages-and-hours legislation, called for a reëxamination of all New Deal reforms "in order that unnecessary regulations may be removed," took an indirect slap at President Roosevelt's proposed investigation of monopoly, and declared that "government can . . . best serve agriculture by the most generous encouragement of private initiative." Equally eloquent are the omissions. Some fourteen million are unemployed, but in the seventeen resolutions there is not a word concerning this problem. (Hoover, in his "grass roots" speech the other day, supplied the missing resolution when he proposed the reduction of relief by one-third, with the burden shifted to the states and communities.) And in all the seventeen resolutions and in the numerous speeches there was not a word on civil liberties, not a word concerning the shocking revelations of industrial espionage, strikebreaking, and terrorism made public by the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee.

The Chamber of Commerce program is the same program that tory Republicans and Democrats in Congress are attempting to foist on the nation in defiance of the verdict of the 1936 elections.

Writers Take Sides

AMERICAN writers are not neutral. They have faced the issue in Spain, and they have taken their stand. Their enthusiastic support of the loyalist government is a clear recognition of the truth that impartiality is a crime when culture and humanity are at stake.

The views of 418 leading American authors on the conflict between democracy and fascism in Spain are recorded in a forthcoming book, *Writers Take Sides,* to be published by the League of American Writers. Only one writer (Gertrude Atherton) expresses opposition to the democratic government of Spain; seven evade the issue; 410 strongly support the fight against the fascist invasion. Among the writers who favor the Loyalists are:

William Allen White, Franklin P. Adams, Sherwood Anderson, Maxwell Anderson, Carleton Beals, Van Wyck Brooks, Stephen Vincent Benét, William Rose Benét, Louis Bromfield, Bruce Bliven, Pearl S. Buck, Marc Connelly, Rachel Crothers, Countee Cullen, Elmer Davis, Paul de Kruif, Floyd Dell, Theodore Dreiser, R. L. Duffus, William Faulkner, Edna Ferber, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Ernest Hemingway, Granville Hicks, Dashiel Hammett, Albert Halper, Harry Hansen, John Haynes Holmes, Langston Hughes, Fanny Hurst, Inez Haynes Irwin, Will Irwin, Josephine Johnson, H. V. Kaltenborn, Rockwell Kent, Manuel Komroff, Edgar Lee Masters, William McFee, Charles G. Norris, Kathleen Norris, Walter Pach, Lynn Riggs, George Seldes, Vincent Sheean, Upton Sinclair, Wilbur Daniel Steele, John Steinbeck, Dorothy Thompson, Louis Untermeyer, Carl Van Doren, Dorothy Van Doren, Mark Van Doren, Lillian D. Wald, Richard Watts, Jr., Thornton Wilder.

The opinions of the American writers are unequivocal. Thornton Wilder is "unreservedly for the legal government and loyalist party in Spain"; William Allen White, in reply to the question whether he is opposed to Franco and fascism, says: "Sure, multiplied by six." John Steinbeck regards such a question addressed to him as insulting: "Have you seen anybody not actuated by greed who was for Franco?" And Edgar Lee Masters is "for republican Spain, *of course.*"

Similarly, a few days ago, eighteen of the leading scientists in this country, including three Nobel Prize winners—Harold C. Urey of Columbia, Harlow Shapley of Harvard, and Arthur H. Compton of Chicago University—asked President Roosevelt to lift the embargo on Spain. "Aid to democratic Spain," they declared, "would be an act in defense of world democracy and American freedom."

Naturally, the struggle for democracy in Spain is the concern not only of the Spanish people, but of all progressive and freedom-loving humanity.

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FORSYTHE'S PAGE

Out With Their Teeth!

DURING the course of the recent debate in the Commons which resulted in approving the Anglo-Irish compact, Winston Churchill arose and made a speech which was rather touching in its pathetic overtones. He was speaking against the treaty, but his remarks were aimed at what he considered to be the present-day British policy of taking a smack on the nose and enjoying it. Are we to be known, he asked plaintively, as a nation which can only be moved by coercion? Will we cringe and back-water and surrender every time anybody stands up to us?

The interesting part of this is that a myth has been maintained for centuries that Albion would listen to reason, would meet anybody half-way, but would never be bullied. I say myth because there were people close to Mr. Churchill and his family who knew better long years ago and had no hesitancy about proclaiming it. If you will read the diaries of Wilfred Scawen Blunt, you will find a man who not only recognized this important characteristic of the British ruling class, but who advised subject nations under English domination to practice it in gaining their freedom.

Blunt was the most English of men, loving horses as well as humans if not better, living the typical English country life, carrying on in British society in a way to which he was entitled by the distinction of his own family—and yet he was one of the greatest rebels ever known in that country and a great disdainer of most of the British myths. He was an authority on Arabia and India and Egypt, and fought with undiminished vigor for the rights of such nations till the end of his days. Since this was the period of Kipling's influence, and the doctrine that England owed it to God to carry the White Man's Burden was paramount, Blunt fought with little chance of success, but he struggled grimly on. He was a most complicated creature, and for that reason he may not have been as effective as more boorish gentlemen who practiced individually what Blunt knew to be the only weapon that England respected: force. He certainly was less effective than the suffragettes, who turned the place upside down for years, chained themselves to seats in the Commons and to lampposts, broke up the Derby at Epsom Downs by running out on the track in front of the charging horses, went on hunger strikes, lambasted policemen with clubs and umbrellas, and in general made supreme nuisances of themselves and outraged every decent English feeling—and eventually got their way; which they would never have done in a thousand years if they had acted with good taste. The suffragettes had tried the other way. They had held conferences with Asquith and members of the Cabinet. The matter would be taken under advisement, something would be done, etc. The suffragettes finally woke up to find that they were being double-crossed. They were being lied to and wangled about in the nice suave way always used by British statesmen. It was then that the ladies got tough. They kicked England right smack in the teeth. They acted outrageously. They bit and scratched and yelled. They got their way by sheer force.

Shortly after the suffragette trouble came the fight over Ireland, when Northern Ireland (Protestant Ulster) armed and defied the regular British army. Worse than that, officers of the regular army refused to carry out government orders for the suppression of armed force in Ulster. It was treason of the worst sort, but it was excused because the traitors happened to be members of the better families. However, when Northern Ireland armed, Southern Ireland became aroused at the threat to Home Rule plans being considered at that time.

It was then that Blunt received a letter from a friend of his in Dublin, Mrs. Colum, whom he had met previously as Molly Maguire. She asked if it wouldn't be a sensible thing for Catholic Ireland to arm as a counter-demonstration against the actions of Ulster. Blunt answered in this manner:

> You know I have always been a Fenian in my sympathies, and, though it is twenty-five years since I was in Ireland and I am living now quite away from politics, I confess it rouses me to hear talk again of physical force. . . . A long experience of British imperial ways has taught me that in dealing with British governments, the best sort of moral force is always material force. Our people cannot be trusted to go straight without two strong incentives, money in front of them (like the carrot in front of an ass), and a big stick behind. The Irish National Volunteers must be the big stick. . . .

Mrs. Colum happens to be the Mary Colum, who now presents the conservative literary point of view so persistently in the *Forum* and other publications, no longer the revolutionist anxious to meet force with force. . . .

The important thing is what Blunt said. Hitler and Mussolini seem to have learned the lesson well. The Conservative statesmen who are now so eager to make a deal with Mussolini and Hitler on any basis were the same men who sat in office for years when republican Germany asked for justice, and did nothing but mumble righteous platitudes. The case of Germany in regard to the Rhineland or to her colonies is no better in 1938 than it was in 1923 or in 1931. If it were a mere matter of reason and good sense and judgment, republican Germany would have been supported; England could have made compromises which would have allowed democracy to live in Germany. But it was like Wilfred Scawen Blunt said: England will act only from reasons of greed or because it has been bludgeoned from the rear. England will consent to talk of colonies only when the club is held menacingly over her head. She will then offer to give away any colony which is not needed by the Portuguese or Belgians or Dutch. The struggle between greed and fear becomes ludicrous. When a point is reached when greed cannot bear retreating another step, the English take a stand. That is the time they will fight. *I point out again that I refer solely to the ruling-class English, the people who sell out so piously when there is another form of reaction on hand to benefit.*

The signs from the little isle are better than one might assume from what I have said here. There are more English who see through the holy nonsense of the empire than one might suppose. The two recent by-elections reveal that the people are not as certain that Chamberlain has saved the world from war by selling out to Mussolini as the American editorial writers would like to believe. It is always astonishing and comforting to find that behind that vast façade of British stupidity and snobbishness lives a group of people who understand it in all its ludicrousness and have no illusions about the good intentions of the ruling families. Things are happening in England when men like John Strachey and Cedric Belfrage cease to be captives of their Cambridge-Oxford upbringing and analyze the incongruities of British life as scathingly as was done by Blunt, who hated the British imperialists. That spirit of criticism is growing; its effect is being seen in the cleavage between those who love England only for what it can do for them and those who want to make it a land fit for Englishmen. The latter can succeed only by aggressively demonstrating their strength and unity. If reactionary England feels that its power is waning, you will see another Ulster—the revolt of the upper classes. The way for the common people to prevent that is the way of Wilfred Scawen Blunt, of the suffragettes: a good swift kick where it counts.

If in the near future you see a picture of an animal with its mouth open, roaring, you will be able to gauge history accurately. If it is an animal with three front teeth missing, it will be the British lion; otherwise it will simply be Leo of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

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Why I Am Not an Active Communist

Anonymous

IN the first place, I feel that it is necessary for me to explain that I am suffering under no delusion that it makes any particular difference to the cause of progress whether or not I throw my feeble strength as an individual into the battle that is raging today. It is only that I believe, with some foundation for that belief, that there are countless others of my kind—another "lost generation," perhaps—whose united and militant support would prove of immeasurable aid to the forces of light and reason.

It seems essential next to emphasize that, with no reservations, I can accept intellectually all the fundamental premises of Communist ideology, that I can no longer find any possible reason or even excuse for the continuation of a capitalist or profit system in America or anywhere in the world. I believe that capitalism has outlived its day of usefulness, that it has fallen into putrid decay, and that its continued existence is a direct road to fascism.

As nearly as I can judge at long range the system now in effect in Soviet Russia, I am willing and anxious to believe that it is aimed in the right direction, that it has succeeded amazingly well and *will* progress to its ultimate objective despite worldwide opposition. Difficult though it has been for a person of my background and training, I am willing, also, to agree that the recent trials were necessary, that *nearly* all—if not all—of those punished deserved their sentences, and that no punishment can be too severe for those who have betrayed the trust of an entire people at such a critical period in that people's growth. If—I say *if*—an innocent man, or several comparatively innocent men, have suffered as a result of popular indignation, it is to be deplored as unfortunate or tragic, but not surprising. Innumerable innocent men have suffered and died in less worthy causes.

What more is there for me to say—or to believe? There only remains to *do*, and there I confront the barrier which until the present has proved insurmountable. One of my closest friends has crossed it, and is far happier than I, although my interest and belief in the eventual upward surge of the proletariat far antedates his. Long before he talked or even casually thought of social and economic problems as they affect the great masses, both my wife and I were deeply concerned and were, in one small way or another possible to us at the time, showing our interest and sympathy with the downtrodden. Yet, when his mind did turn in the direction I had preached for several years, he moved swiftly and unfalteringly to the logical conclusion of his reasoning. He joined the party and has since been active as a labor organizer and "missionary," while I remain in almost exactly the same negative position I occupied several years ago.

It may be said that merely "joining" the party is unimportant and not necessary, that I am probably accomplishing just as much in the proper direction without taking the final step across the line. It might even be pointed out that by joining the party I should lose any effectiveness I might have, because of the "stigma" marking me out among my associates were I to acknowledge publicly my affiliation with the despised "Reds." The latter assumption might possibly be true, but the former is unquestionably not true.

For I am *not* accomplishing all that I might were I firmly committed to a specific pledge or policy, working with others on a pre-arranged, carefully laid-out plan. Therein lies the secret of my weakness, and of the weakness of innumerable hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other Americans who vaguely describe themselves as "liberals" or "progressive democrats." I want to do only what *I* want to do, and only when I want to do it. Basically, it is obviously a phase of the old, old cry, "I must be an individual," but recognizing it does not aid me in freeing myself of it.

I have a comfortable home, with a very small income which must be considerably supplemented through daily work if I am to support my wife and two children according to the standards we have set for ourselves. We have achieved a happiness and congeniality in our personal relationship—my wife and I—that I know is rare. As a result, neither of us is anxious to spend many of our evenings away from home, since we find greatest contentment in reading and conversation.

Were I to join the party and to follow its program conscientiously, it would mean, to a major extent, the end of all this life, I know. I say I *know*, because I have seen many instances of the endless round of meetings and conferences which are essential to any political or social progress. All of my "work" would necessarily have to be done at night, as is the case with practically every party member, since I *must* earn money to live.

My wife would gladly accompany me in any definite stand I decided to take, so that working for the party need not separate us too completely. But two young children must be cared for, and, to my mind, if they are to grow to decent development, caring for children does not mean handing them over to a nurse for the greater part of their infancy and youth (even if you can afford a nurse, which we cannot). And yet, always the thought nags our minds, "There is so much to be done, and it must not be delayed," so that we are almost incessantly laboring under the burden of an imaginary or real guilt.

We can talk to our friends and acquaintances, yes, try to bring to them some of the deep conviction we both know as to the need for change, the inevitability of action that all must face sooner or later. But there is more than enough talk already, talk that circles endlessly until it repeats itself, talk that leaves us feeling guiltier still. For always we are faced with the inward query, "What are we *doing?*"

And, as everyone of intelligence who is sympathetic to the Communist program knows, it becomes daily more difficult, even hopeless, to attempt to convert to enlightened ideas and ideals the American middle and upper-middle-class groups which still retain some essence of prosperity. These are the people who have been hardened into their molds by an intensive barrage of newspaper propaganda, until any progressive move is automatically labeled a violation of the Constitution or of "democratic rights" and privileges. There is nothing more depressing to me than to see the average man or woman of my acquaintance, ranging in age from the late twenties to the late thirties. In every instance I can recall at the moment, he or she has, within the last four

The personal dilemma presented in this article confronts many members of the professional and middle classes today. Readers who, in a similar quandary, have found a satisfactory solution are urged to write to us. The best statements will be published in forthcoming issues of NEW MASSES.—THE EDITORS.

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years or so, developed a "safe" mental barrier, locking out any truths which might be disturbing. This barrier becomes increasingly difficult to penetrate as the days pass, and as one allegedly liberal newspaper after another moves hypocritically or frankly into the reactionary class.

Since most of the people with whom I come into social or business contact are of the "substantial" category, men and women interested chiefly in "getting ahead," I have begun to find it practically hopeless to attempt to arouse in them any interest or sympathy in my ideas, or, rather, in the ideas which seem of such vital and pressing importance to me. As I see it, the bourgeois class in America will, as has been the case in other countries, provide the most unyielding opposition to any possible revolutionary change. I have heard it said that another severe depression might stir people of this type into wakefulness, but I believe implicitly that it would merely make them ripe for fascism, anti-Semitism, or some similar movement which seemed, on its face, to offer them an "out" without any serious disturbance of their normal routine. The fact that they, too, would suffer under a fascist form of government cannot be brought home to them, as nearly as I can determine. This rigidity of backward-looking attitude is definitely true of Jews I know, as well as of Gentiles, despite the obvious growth and fostering of anti-Semitism at the present time.

So, there seems little for me—for my kind of person—to do, without completely subjugating my entire life to a program of revolutionary action. And this, for the time being, I cannot make myself do. Freely, I admit that I have become soft (if I was ever hard). Freely, I admit that my life is of no importance compared to the services I might be able to render in behalf of the millions of men, women, and children who so desperately need all the help anyone can give them.

But to me, my life *is* of importance, as I am living it now, and the normal span of years is terribly brief, at best. I do not want to change my life, at least in its basic, fundamental form. I cannot bring myself to the point of surrendering my family and myself to hardships which would result from giving up my job; nor can I, on the other hand, see my way clear to continue my present method of earning a living while at the same time attempting to devote all of my free time, which I want to spend with my family and feel that I should, to the variety of activities required of a sincere Communist. When I say "required," I mean required not only by his party program, but by his conscience as well.

Selfish? Perhaps. I am not proud, certainly, of whatever it is in me, or whatever it is that I lack, which has led me to this unhappy impasse. At the same time, I wonder how many Communists, given what I have of comfort and happiness under existing conditions, would be able to solve the same question when it confronted them. There are a few, I know, who *have* solved it. I should be grateful to them for the answer.

Ned Hilton

"Probably those alarmists trying to throw another war scare into us."

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How Wisconsin Views La Follette

By Harold Douglas

MADISON, WIS.

THE La Follette third party stands at the moment as a big question mark. It is difficult to say why it was launched; it is more difficult to say whether it will survive, and it is still more difficult to say just how, in the present situation, it can serve a progressive purpose.

Why did Phil La Follette start a third party? We in Wisconsin were asking that question before the mass meeting of April 28. We asked it at the meeting, and we are still asking it after the meeting. Nobody, except Phil and a few high-ups in the Progressive Party, really seems to know. The first intimation of the governor's plans came in a series of broadcasts prior to the meeting when he unleashed his now celebrated blasts against the New Deal. As we sat around the supper table listening to those blasts, we found it hard to believe our ears. We had always taken it for granted that there was an "understanding" between the governor and the President, that the two liberal camps were acting in concert.

And apparently that ignorance of the governor's plans was not limited only to the general public in Wisconsin. The majority of members of the Progressive Party knew nothing of these plans; even some leading members of the party, it is said, were not taken into confidence.

What, then, did Phil La Follette have in mind when he suddenly launched his third party? The most cynical, as well as the most common, explanation is that he has his eye on the White House. And it may be that some truth lurks therein. But it is also possible that he sincerely believed such a move would aid the cause of progress and liberalism. If that is so, it only demonstrates the confused character of the governor's thinking and his failure to understand the nature of the political struggle that has developed in the country. And his speech was, to say the least, a shocking exhibition. He managed to echo almost everything the reactionaries are saying and to omit everything that genuine progressives are fighting for.

Without underestimating the potential harm that the new movement can do in dividing the liberal forces, it is already apparent that even in his own state, Phil's splash has left little but dwindling ripples as far as the general public is concerned. A man active on the inside of Wisconsin politics told me: "I have found a few people for it, but many more against it. But the great majority are just indifferent." Another person who is close to the nerve-center of state politics said after the April 28 meeting: "Well, boys, we came here and expected Phil to say: 'Now let all us liberals get together.' But instead of that he said: 'Let's build a swimming pool—and let me and Bob go swimming.'"

The launching of the National Progressives of America placed the reactionary press of Wisconsin in something of a dilemma. On the one hand, the tory newspapers welcome any move that is directed at the New Deal and that may split the progressives nationally and in the state. On the other hand, they have been waging merciless war on La Follette and the Progressive Party and are ready to use any club to drive out the administration in the state elections. For it must be remembered that Phil La Follette has in the past stood for the liberal policies that big business hates in Wisconsin as in the rest of the nation. And so we find praise rubbing elbows with abuse in the comments of the Wisconsin tory press on the new La Follette party.

Thus the ultra-reactionary Milwaukee *Journal,* the most powerful newspaper in the state, uses the third-party move to arouse sentiment against Phil La Follette as a potential dictator. "We trust our governor has not lingered too long on Chancellor Hitler's book, *Mein Kampf,* and particularly over Chaper XI on 'Propaganda and Organization'," it sneers editorially in the April 29 issue. Hearst's Milwaukee *Sentinel,* on the other hand, beams on the governor's characterization of federal relief as "coddling or spoon-feeding the American people." "Those are the very words that appeal to the heart of every citizen who cherishes traditions of self-confidence, self-help, and self-support." The Oshkosh *Northwestern* of April 31 declares that the La Follette venture "may prove an opportunity for Republican leadership to clean house and get down to fundamentals that would win a voting support not otherwise possible." And the Wisconsin *State Journal* joyfully chortles: "This is a breach which opens the doors for Republican victories."

John Heliker

The Milwaukee *Leader* (Socialist), astonishingly enough, tags after the Republicans by declaring (April 29): "The speech, like the radio talks, revealed the inadequacy of the New Deal method of approach to the evils of unemployment and poverty." And ignoring the danger of splitting the progressives, it finds that "the time is ripe for a new party."

A number of progressive organs have, however, adopted a different view. One of the most influential figures in Progressive politics, William T. Evjue, editor of the *Capital Times* and former comrade-in-arms of "Old Bob" La Follette, spread across his front page a signed editorial which concluded:

> Surely any political realignment that is based on the repudiation of Roosevelt will only end in the division of the liberal forces of the country and play directly into the hands of the big interests. The *Capital Times* sincerely hopes that in charting the future course of the venture which he proposes, that Governor La Follette will not find it necessary to deter one iota from the credit and glory due to the greatest liberal in the country today—Franklin D. Roosevelt.

And the Waupaca County *Post* declares: "Mr. La Follette says he wishes to 'unite' with the progressive Americans of the Midwest, while in his own mind he must surely know his action in deserting Roosevelt has split the liberal movement wide open. . . . The cleavage between the Roosevelt and La Follette forces already has given conservative Republican leaders greater hopefulness than they've known since 1932."

A similar position has been taken by Assemblyman Emil Costello, state president of the C.I.O., who has urged immediate coöperation with the New Deal and other progressive forces.

The La Follettes have gone off the deep end and given their worst enemies a weapon not only against the New Deal, but against their own Progressive movement in Wisconsin. It is not yet too late for them to climb back to the solid ground of the developing nationwide recovery program and seeking to unite its forces for the congressional elections. If, instead of fighting the New Deal, they join hands with all liberal groups to defeat the tory offensive, their new movement can be converted into a constructive influence in the the political life of the country.

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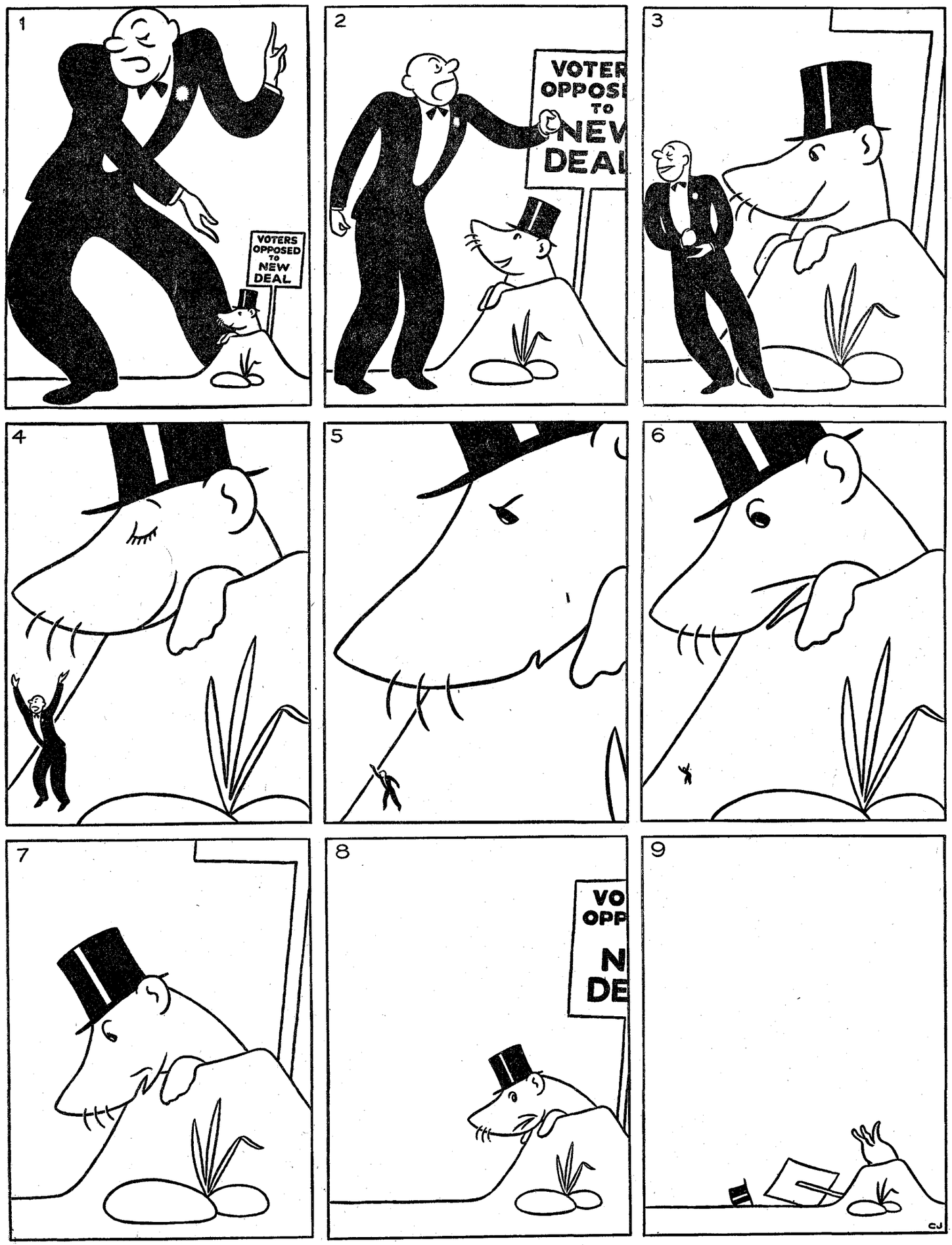

The Primary Candidate Who Tried to Make a Mountain Out of a Mole-Hill

Crockett Johnson

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Saturday Night in Jersey City

By Paul Cox

OUR MINDS stopped working in the Jersey City tube station coming home. Maybe the five hours of organized hoodlumism had gotten under our skins. One minute we were six reporters having a swell time kidding and wisecracking on the station platform. The next, we had become tense with loathing.

We heard the screams—I hope to God I never hear anything like that again. We raced up to the next level. The man was screaming—like a woman, like an animal. You can't write this—there is simply no way. He was on the floor. Five or six huge men bent over him, kicking him. A cop stood nearby.

The man was up—running from the thugs and we following at top speed. The tube station was full of insane motion. The pack was at the man's heels. In a second he was down the other stairway. For a horrible moment I thought he would not be able to pull up at the edge of the platform, and a train was coming in.

They got him down again. A reporter half-dragged him into the train. We all, except one, squeezed in—got the guy a seat. The door closed. I sat beside him—a medium-sized, disheveled man whose face I would never recognize if I saw it again in normal condition. I didn't know blood could be that color. Bright, pure. . . . On his face, on his head, down his torn shirt. Hysterically, perhaps, I thought, "This is the thing Hague hates—*red*. . . . Like hell he does! He loves it—in nice warm, liquid form—smearing the workers' foreheads—trickling from the ears."

A dozen reporters appeared from nowhere, all going home. The train jolted through the tunnel. We shook ourselves out of this fantastic delirium.

"What's your name? How old? . . . Why did they do it?"

"I don't know," he whispered. "I don't know. I was on my way home."

Another man at the end of the train moaned, drooped forward. They had gotten him, too. A big young fellow standing by the door had open flesh under his eye.

YOU MAY LAUGHINGLY ACCEPT the crack about Jersey having seceded from the Union. But until you have spent a night like that of May 7 with Hague's gang ("I love every hair on his head"—Michael Condron, first vice-president, A.F. of L. Central Labor Union, Hudson County), you cannot know that it is a moment for solemn thanksgiving to emerge from the tube station at Cortlandt Street.

We unconsciously threw back our shoulders. The wisecracking aloofness returned—halfway. But something had happened to all of us.

Bill, who had failed to make the train in the fracas, caught up with us in New York. He was more shaken than anybody else. He saw the gorillas dusting off their hands after that little job on the man in the station.

"Why, it was a gorgeous experience to them. I never saw such horrible . . . One fellow was complaining he didn't get a chance at that 'Jew bastard.' I stood there. I didn't dare move. I smoked my cigarette down to the very last bit. I was afraid if I lighted another I might attract attention."

Later he said, "I heard 'Jew bastard' a lot tonight. Did you notice that? It isn't just 'the Reds' any more. But I didn't use 'Jew bastard' in my story."

"You couldn't," somebody said.

Jersey City had begun to prepare itself days before. The veterans got their orders Thursday night. Eight hundred were to advance on Journal Square with two feet of rubber hose apiece when those Reds, Congressmen O'Connell and Bernard and Councilman Michael Quill, came to speak on Saturday. Officials of the Building Trades Council and Central Labor Union, Hague's "labor" supporters, got their instructions at City Hall on Friday and tried to whip their men into line at a meeting that night. City and county employees, at a command meeting in the armory basement Saturday afternoon, were told to be on duty from 7:30 to 11 o'clock to carry placards. All twelve ward-clubs were to rally to protect their boss from democracy.

The mayor, in one glorious gesture, was going to reassure the big-business owners of the state. He was going to wipe out once and for all the possibility of freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, twin weapons of organized labor.

My first impression of the city was one of suspicion and secretiveness. Strangely, I never felt I was suspected of being a Red. The people I talked to feared, if anything, that I was for Hague. Cops lined both sides of the alleyway leading from the tube entrance. Every ten feet, there and all around the square, they stood. It was 6:30, and the only gathering was one of newspapermen and photographers. A huge sign stopped me just outside of the station. A similar billboard was being put up at the last minute over a restaurant advertisement overlooking the square. Like most of the other printed propaganda I saw, it was directed primarily against Norman Thomas.

This sign carried a blown-up reproduction of an Associated Press photograph taken of Thomas at the Socialists' Madison Square rally on May Day. His fist was in the air.

"Here is Norman Thomas pledging allegiance to Russia," it read. "This Red is endeavoring to invade Jersey City. This is the type of allegiance we fought against. We want *him* and all Communists and other un-American groups out of our city."

In smaller type at the bottom: "Paid for by the Veterans' Committee for Law and Order."

The "veterans' committee," I discovered, is Col. Hugh Kelly, Hague stooge, who is now Gov. A. Harry Moore's secretary. "He fought the war from Camp Dix," I was told.

All automobiles were cleared from the square and the five converging sidestreets at 6:30. If the drivers were not there, the cars were hauled off by the police wrecking-truck. Camera and newsreel men, later numbering forty, were getting set on the China Clipper building, a two-story corner-building. The real estate man who owns it got ten bucks apiece from the photographers.

A neat young waitress who served me in one of the square's eating places gave me an inkling of how the working people of Jersey City feel. I pretended ignorance of the situation. She explained that the cops were not going to let the congressmen speak.

"Don't you read the papers?" she said.

I pointed to my *Jersey Journal* and said I hadn't had time.

"Oh, that!" she sneered. "I mean a real paper, the New York papers." The last was almost inaudible. She left hurriedly.

Later: "Of course, that was just a personal opinion. You can't say anything around here."

"Well, anyhow," I said, "you've got a good view of the show."

"I'm not interested. I think it's disgusting."

Even so early I began to notice tough-faced, thick-handed men, posted at intervals and lolling around in the square, many in cheap new clothes. They were as obvious as the cops. I also saw dozens of shoeshine boys and toughies in their early teens or younger, waiting in the sidestreets. All were to play important roles in Mr. Hague's anti-Red drama.

I could not get into the building from which I was to see the speakers, without a card signed by a Hague man. My guide, a local reporter, had seen to that. I could not take a camera upstairs. I could not walk up the stairs but had to wait for the elevator. I could not ascend in the elevator until the operator had the spoken word from the detective. I could not enter the third-floor room where I was to sit, until an official had looked me over and unlocked the door. I could not smoke. I was not to raise the shade on the window high or allow the light to glint against my opera glasses, because somebody in the square might notice my presence there. I was not supposed to be there because the man who owned the building was a Hague man. (Figure that one out if you

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can.) As a matter of fact, the evening was still young when four jocular Hague detectives, smelling strongly of liquor, came up to the room and stayed until they apparently were satisfied that we were okay.

By 7:30 there were probably four or five thousand people in the square. They didn't "collect." They advanced, emerging in what looked like organized groups from the side-streets. Hundreds carried small American flags, Hague's gift, distributed by veterans. Then the two veterans' bands marched into the square. These were to be the inciters and at the same time the temporary peacemakers of the evening.

"You got to hand it to Hague—whatever you think—he's a showman," one spectator said to me. Not only a showman, a shrewd psychologist. No doubt he watched those bands with satisfaction from his sixth-floor window in the Trust Company of New Jersey building which dominates the square.

The Newark veterans' band, in dark uniforms and chromium helmets, and the Hudson County band, with the same helmets but bright green-and-tan uniforms, gathered the crowd, kept it there, and time and again broke up localized disturbances. The hundreds of punch-drunk hooligans, frenzied urchins, and other members of Hague's army, acted in concert with the bands. It was exactly like a man attacking another by knocking him down with a right hook (the hooligans), lifting and holding him upright with his left hand (the bands), hauling off again with his right, picking him up again, knocking him down, and so on.

Fifteen minutes after their arrival, a tatterdemalion procession of fifty men entered the square, each carrying a big white sign on a two-by-three stick. A larger placard at the fore read: "Norman Thomas—Roger Baldwin —Stalin—One for All and All for One—KEEP OUT." There were such slogans as: "Reds Destroy Industry and Business—but Not in Jersey City," "Jersey City Is Free from Radicalism," and "Let All the Russian Radicals and Foreigners Go Back to Russia."

About thirty veterans joined this group, only a few of whom wore overseas caps. Eventually the original sign-carriers dropped out, perhaps needing liquid replenishment, and their places were taken by street urchins. The signs were torn off gradually. During the last hours of the marching back and forth, the sticks alone were being carried by the kids, who beat them rhythmically on the pavement. A score of agitated women, bobbing up and down on high-heeled slippers, marched with the parade for a while, waving flags. They were Gold Star Mothers.

The first disorder took place at 8 o'clock, according to my notes. A man in a light-blue sweater whom I could easily distinguish and so watched for some time, circulated among the crowd, always returning to a knot of his friends. He picked fights, one after another—on what excuse, I could not know. One such fight arose when someone tried to distribute the *Catholic Worker,* I later learned.

Whenever the crowd coagulated around a brawl, one of the bands marched in double-quick time, horns braying, drums thumping, directly into the concentrated area. It not only broke up the fight, but distracted the mob. Until midnight purposeful fights were dispelled by the tireless musicians, at intervals of from fifteen to forty minutes.

My notes run something like this:

8:00—first disorder—"My Wild Irish Rose."
8:20—disturbance near tube—"Hinky Dinky Parlez-vous."
8:25—twenty more men with signs.
8:40—American flag introduced at head of parade—25,000 people in square.
9:10—disturbance—"Pack Up Your Troubles."
9:35—radio bulletin—wives persuaded congressmen not to come (later denied)—slight cheer—"Happy Days Are Here Again."
9:40—crowd noisier—disturbance—cameraman (local) slugged—"There's a Long, Long Trail."
9:45—another disorder—both bands play different airs at once—mad noise.
9:55—another disturbance—"Dinah Lee"—"Some One of These Days"—cheers.
10:00—"Let Me Call You Sweetheart"—clapping—crowd sings.
10:15—circle dancing, singing "Hi Ho the Derry-o"—drunk vet in middle waves flag each hand.
10:25—disturbance—crowd rushed tube—"Wearing of the Green."
10:45—rioting—two taken off by cops—both hardly stand—man (vet) slugs one while police hold him up—other hit on top head nightstick—other cop holding him—crowd running away and toward—panic—"There Are Smiles That Make You Happy."
11:00—both bands quick tempo—jittery.

After midnight we walked through a crowd thinned down to a couple of thousand. The band played "The Star Spangled Banner." We walked innocently along, forgetting. . . .

"*You*—take your hats off!" a woman shrilled at us.

The hats came off. Then the band swung into "Home Sweet Home."

A smudgy kid, his face flushed and tired, stumbled along in front of us, holding a tray of buttons.

"Here y'are. Stop Communism—five cents. Get your button. Only five cents. Stop Communism—five cents."

His Honor, the Mayor

John Mackey

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READERS' FORUM

Reduce Naturalization Fees

TO THE NEW MASSES:

WE wish to call to the attention of NEW MASSES readers the bill, H. R. 9907, "to reduce certain fees in naturalization proceedings. . . ." introduced by Representative Emanuel Celler, which is to be given public hearings in the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, on Wednesday morning, May 18.

H. R. 9907 would reduce the fee of $7.50 to $10.00, the minimum usually paid for citizenship papers, to $2.00. We feel strongly that the reduction of naturalization fees at the present time would aid greatly in encouraging a great portion of the four million non-citizens to become American citizens and would strengthen their loyalty to the American government.

It is to be kept in mind that increasing discrimination against non-citizens in private and public employment, including W.P.A., makes it extremely difficult for many non-citizens to pay the present naturalization fees.

We wish to call upon your readers to write to Representative Samuel Dickstein, Chairman, House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, Washington, D. C., urging that the House Committee take favorable action on H. R. 9907.

ABNER GREEN,
American Committee for
Protection of Foreign Born.

New York City.

Race Prejudice at Wisconsin

TO THE NEW MASSES:

ONCE again the University of Wisconsin is the scene of anti-Semitic prejudice. Here, on the campus of "America's Most Liberal University," we have witnessed one of the most overt and repugnant of intolerant acts—the refusal to let a student editor hold the office to which he was democratically elected, solely because, in the words of his ousters, "he had the wrong parents."

Richard Davis was appointed editor of the *Daily Cardinal,* one of the few remaining uncensored campus papers, by the retiring student board of control, in keeping with the custom of twenty-four years. He was selected because he was the most competent and experienced man available, and because he gave promise of running a fearless and significant newspaper. It was obvious that he would be the selection of any impartial group. Before he was elected, however, a representative of the new board, "stooges" of fraternity groups, threatened that Davis' appointment would be immediately rescinded the day the new board took office. This person declared he was sure this would please Professor Grant Hyde, head of the School of Journalism.

Impatient in their zeal, the new board ousted Davis a day before they took office. The pretext given was that Davis would not work well with "all the manifold groups," but the statement was also made by the head of the incoming board that another Jewish editor would not be tolerated. This move seemed welcome to faculty advisers of the paper. Professor Hyde, for one, shouted at the retiring editor, Morton Newman, "You Jewish kids have gotten enough around here. Why do you keep asking for more?"

Ninety percent of the staff (the same staff which, it had been argued, wouldn't work with Davis) went on strike, and has been publishing a strike *Cardinal* since the first of May. Financed by student and faculty donations, this strike *Cardinal* has belied the quick retreat made by reactionary faculty and students that the matter of race was not a consideration—that it was just a routine campus political squabble. Over 2,500 have signed a petition demanding the recall of the board and the reinstatement of Davis. Many faculty members have lent their moral encouragement as they recognized the value of a paper which has been the chief bulwark against compulsory R.O.T.C., alumni meddling, "do-nothing" educational policy, and interference with academic freedom.

President Dykstra has refused to make any move. Politely, but firmly, the *Cardinal* has called on him for the entire year to be more explicit in his statements that "democracy must be saved" at a time when educational democracy at the University of Wisconsin was threatened. In a recent address to alumni he said that the state newspapers had made the strike seem too serious. He declared it an indication of healthy democracy that two papers were being printed. He has made no move to expedite a student referendum, but has made efforts to arrive at a "compromise."

Meanwhile, a strike and a scab paper are appearing on the campus, which, in the words of President Dykstra, is a sign of healthy democracy!

JEREMIAH OLSON.

Madison, Wis.

"All the News"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

FACTS of a union victory often aren't news in the capitalist press; fakes of an employer about the situation make page one. Here is the evidence:

The management of the Park Central Hotel, New York, recently posted notices of a 5 percent pay cut for all departments "on account of the drastic reduction of revenue." Hotel and Club Employees' Union, Local 6, A. F. of L., which with notable success is leading the drive to unionize New York's hotels, immediately swung into action. At a conference it arranged with the Park Central management and representatives of the Hotel Association, it protested the cut so vigorously that Mr. H. A. Lanzner, managing director, was finally prevailed upon to agree to withdraw the cut. The union's achievement is all the more notable, for if the proposed cut became effective, it would no doubt have been seized upon as a precedent by other hotel managements.

Local 6 distributed leaflets to the workers informing them of its success. Releases, stating the facts, were sent to the newspapers. Not a single daily newspaper, except the *Daily Worker,* used the story. However, on May 6, the New York *Post,* and the *World-Telegram* on page one featured an announcement by the Park Central Hotel management of "a 5 percent increase in salaries for [its] 692 employees." There remains one other illuminating angle: the proposed pay cut was explained by "drastic reduction in revenue"; the mythical increase was explained by "business conditions warrant sharing profits with employees." Park Central Hotel workers are inclined to believe the "drastic revenue reduction" is as fictitious as the announced "increase."

GEORGE ROWLEY.

New York City.

Jane Speed's Bookstore

TO THE NEW MASSES:

THE story of a little shop near the main post-office in downtown Birmingham is a history in miniature of the exciting thing which has happened to the South in the last few years—and a portent of still more exciting things to come.

In 1934, 1907 Fifth Ave., North, was the headquarters of the White Legion, a fascist vigilante organization. In that year Birmingham was a terror-ridden community. The labor movement was weak and on the defensive.

Today a new situation exists in Birmingham. The miners and thousands of steel workers in this coal and steel town, "the Pittsburgh of the South," are organized in the C.I.O. The Communist Party is legal and respected. And today 1907 Fifth Ave., North, is Jane Speed's Book Store, a place where labor, progressive, and Communist literature is sold openly and without hindrance from thugs or authorities.

Through Jane Speed's bookstore, hundreds of Southerners have been introduced to a type of literature they never had access to before. Browder's *The People's Front,* James Allen's *Reconstruction,* Grace Lumpkin's *A Sign for Cain* are sold along with periodicals and pamphlets dealing with immediate issues in the struggle for democracy, peace, and plenty. The store is the only place in Birmingham where C.I.O. literature can be bought. It carries much material of special interest to Negroes. It is also a center of the peace movement, and initiated the Japanese boycott in Birmingham. It displays paintings by local artists and is becoming a cultural center.

The store is not strong enough yet to stand entirely on its own feet. It needs money for publicity in order to reach a broader and wider audience. Particularly it needs gifts of worthwhile second-hand books for use in the lending library. Every person who is able to help will be making an important contribution to the growth of a new progressive-democratic people's alliance in that traditional stronghold of feudalism and reaction, the "solid South."

LAURENT FRANTZ.

Birmingham, Ala.

Letters in Brief

MICHAEL K. CLARK, of Chapel Hill, N. C., writes about Marguerite Young's article, "The Great Debate: Which Way to Peace?" in the issue of May 3. Miss Young wrote that Frederick J. Libby was "once spiritual adviser at Phillips Exeter College." "As a matter of fact," writes Mr. Clark, "Mr. Libby was, during the early years of the war, an instructor of German (or history—I cannot remember which) and Bible at Phillips Exeter Academy, which is not a college at all, but a preparatory school. He was not a spiritual adviser in any sense of the word." . . . Arthur M. Groff, a member of the National Maritime Union, writing on the role of the Trotskyites in the trade unions, sends the following relevant quotations from an editorial in Hearst's San Francisco *Examiner:* "The Pacific Coast has, in the Sailors' Union of the Pacific [in which the Trotsyites play a leading role] a clean-cut, upstanding labor union, whose leaders have fought long and successfully to shake off the grip of Harry Bridges and the Communists." . . . The League of Music Lovers, 121 E. 18th Street, New York City, is finishing its season with a program of music and modern dance at Town Hall, Friday, May 20. On the program will be Martha Graham, the Curtis String Quartet, and Aube Tzerko, pianist. . . . Local 144 of the Window Trimmers' and Displaymen's Union, C.I.O., writes that Liggett & Myers, manufacturers of Chesterfield cigarettes, have continually discriminated against members of their union. They ask progressives, therefore, to join them in a boycott of Chesterfield cigarettes, and thus aid them in their fight for union recognition. . . . Robert Shosteck, of Wenatchee, Wis., feels that John P. Kennedy's article, "If This Be Heresy," in the March 8 issue of NEW MASSES should be reprinted in pamphlet form and given wide distribution. "The writer believes," he writes, "that there are thousands of Catholics, and other religious folk, now pro-Franco, who might be persuaded by this article. They have swallowed the pro-fascist propaganda of certain portions of the religious press and the capitalist press and are unaware of the facts of the situation so ably presented by Mr. Kennedy."

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BOOK REVIEWS

Democracy and Socialism

THE UNITED FRONT: THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM AND WAR, *by Georgi Dimitrov. International Publishers.* $2.

A FEW MONTHS after coming to power in 1933, Hitler declared May 1 the "Day of National Labor." The Nazi Party and its shop cells in the factories forced the workers into the line of march, and trade-union leaders were cajoled or constrained to join the parade. For the first time, May 1 saw no clashes with the police and no opposition to the government. Class warfare, Goebbels announced, had come to an end. Our revolution is not directed against the German workers, Hitler explained. United in one folk-community, "the German people must learn to know each other again." On the following day, according to arrangements made long in advance, German trade unions were entirely liquidated. A clean sweep was made of all headquarters, funds, and newspapers throughout the country, and there began a reign of terror which for systematic cruelty and repression has never been equaled.

A year later, in February 1934, the fascist leagues in Paris mobilized for an assault on French democracy and labor. Using the Stavisky scandal as an excuse, they stormed the Chamber of Deputies, demanding the resignation of the Left deputies. Though they were driven back with some deaths and many casualties, they planned new violence and promised themselves a fascist victory. They were not successful. As Maurice Thorez, general secretary of the French Communist Party, explains: "A vast force was to rise up and bar the way to fascism. The working class of France, roused by the shots fired on February 6, stirred to its depths by the prospects of the fate which the French emulators of Hitler intended for it, and on the determined initiative of the Communist Party, was to form its ranks throughout the country and hurl itself into the fray, throwing the decisive weight of its will and power against the fascist advance." Out of the events of February and a deepening sense of their causes and underlying meaning arose the French Popular Front, united action of the Communist and Socialist Parties, and many of the tactics which have proved so successful in turning back the armed reaction evoked by concentrated capital.

When the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International convened in 1935, the wisdom of the basic tactical line it adopted had already been established in France, and progress had been made in other countries, including the United States. (A half-year before the Seventh World Congress, the Communist Party of the United States called for the formation of a Labor Party—the People's Front in embryo.) The general secretary of the Comintern, Georgi Dimitrov, who two years before had baited Goering and Goebbels in the Supreme Court at Leipzig, tied up their perjured witnesses in contradictions, and convinced half the world that the Nazis themselves had fired the Reichstag, was an epic figure admired in every country, the ideal leader of the fight against the scourge which threatens the working people throughout the world. His report to the congress, entitled "The Fascist Offensive and the Tasks of the Communist International," occupies a third of the present volume. Although it has been published before and is already familiar to thousands of Americans, it is a rich document deserving renewed study, especially in relation to the other reports and speeches included in the volume. Taken together they enable us to follow the development of the political line of the Communist International from the Seventh World Congress to the end of 1937; to review the changing battlefronts and strategies of a gigantic struggle, and to examine the outcome of Comintern tactics in many countries. The political line during these years was distinguished above all by unwavering devotion to principle and objectives, combined with decided flexibility of tactics. Adherence to principle is seen in the progressive triumph of Socialist construction in the Soviet Union and in the fight of Communist Parties of other countries for democracy and freedom, the *sine qua non* of any movement for Socialism or even of trade-union activity; while flexibility of tactics is clearly revealed in the variety of procedures recommended for different nations, cities, and localities, always appropriate to the concrete problems.

Woodcut by Dan Rico

"It should never be forgotten," Dimitrov writes, "that in carrying on a consistent and stubborn struggle for the establishment of a united people's-front the Communists are not pursuing a policy of establishing an unprincipled bloc; they are pursuing a policy based upon principle."

"When we carry on a resolute struggle for the defense of democratic rights and liberties against reaction and fascism, we do so as Marxists, as consistent proletarian revolutionists, not as bourgeois democrats and reformists." Thus in his defense of religious freedom for Protestants and Catholics oppressed by fascism, the Marxist can be consistent and of good conscience.

This is something "leftist" critics who cannot distinguish between principles and tactics will never understand. Protectors of religious freedom, for them, must be religious. Defenders of bourgeois democracy must be bourgeois. Advocates of a people's front must be taking the road of compromise like the German Social-Democrats, and selling Socialism down the river. Adherents to collective security must be preparing alliances of the sort which precipitated the World War, and abandoning the goal of Socialism which can be achieved only by the overthrow of capitalism. Everyone is familiar with such arguments set forth, in the usual case, with much circumstantiality and heat. They confuse tactics which vary with every turn of the battle with principles which remain the same. Finding that tactics vary, which is entirely desirable, they conclude that principles have been abandoned, which is entirely wrong. But such "leftist" cerebration is rigid, inflexible, unhistorical in the main. In condemning collective security, American Socialist groups and their Trotskyist mentors contend that all capitalist governments are aggressors, by their very nature, and that it is folly to distinguish between them. This was true enough for the World War, and the "leftists" can quote Lenin to bear them out. But now, as Dimitrov points out, the situation is different. "Now we have: (1) a proletarian state which is the greatest bulwark of peace; (2) definite fascist aggressors; (3) a number of countries which are in direct danger of attack by fascist aggressors . . . ; (4) other capitalist governments which are interested at the present moment in the maintenance of peace. It is, therefore, completely wrong now to depict all countries as aggressors. Only people who are trying to conceal the real aggressors could so distort the facts. [October 1936]" How much more indubitable this is since the invasions of Spain and China, will be clear to everyone except the "leftists" and Trotskyites, and it only goes

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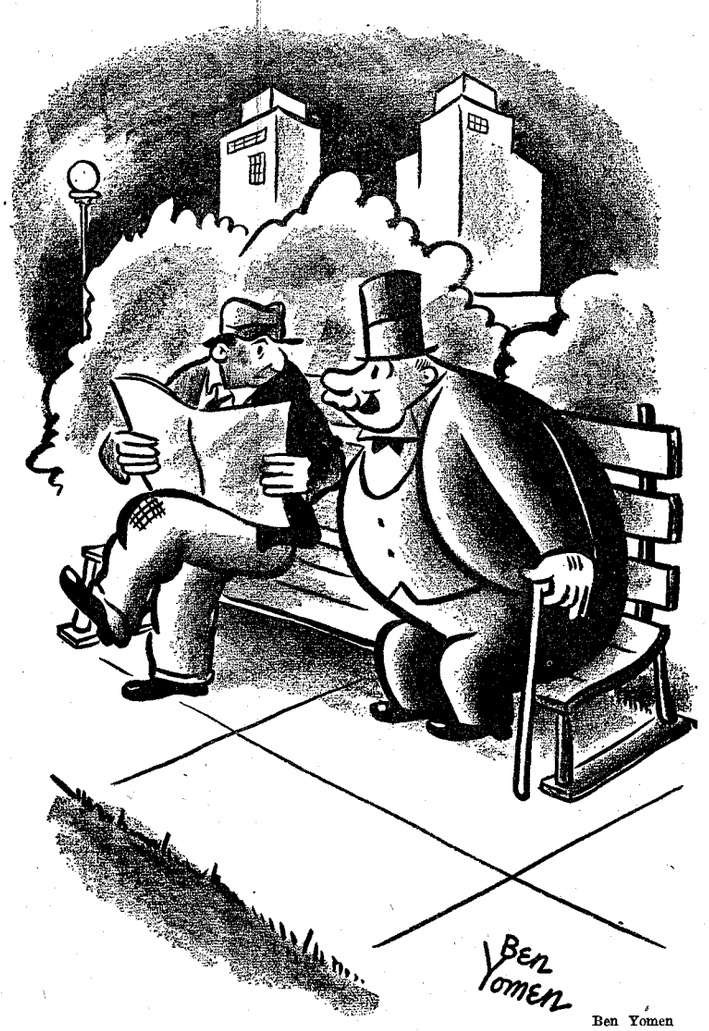
to show that these gentlemen not only embark upon mistakes which no one else would think of, but actually make progress in this course.

Another popular confusion of left-wing Socialists in this country is the identification of the policy of the people's front with the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Dimitrov gives the answer. There is no contradiction between the Communist emphasis on the class struggle and the policies of the popular front unless one disregards the variety of forms the class struggle can assume in historical development, and thinks of every conference between Communist and Radical Socialist deputies as a betrayal of the working class. But the achievements of the popular front gives the lie to this. Nor does collective security exclude independent action by the working class—trade-union appeals, boycotts, strikes, and the like. On the contrary, it is likely that Roosevelt's Chicago speech and his rumored plan of lifting the Spanish embargo will have the effect of increasing trade-union and working-class aid to Spain. It is very odd and very sad that so many liberals in this country have acquired a different impression. Dimitrov's appeals for working-class action are fully as prominent as his call for collective action, and his chapter on Spain ends with an italicized warning that the establishment of united action on the part of the international labor movement in aid of the loyalists is *"imperative."*

Many Socialists, however, disillusioned by betrayals in the past, become suspicious of *any* political action which is not in opposition to the government. Their position is not unlike that of the "left" German Communists criticized by Lenin in *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder.* What these "left" Communists said was that, *"On principle,* we must strive toward the dictatorship of the proletarian class. . . . Accordingly, it is necessary to reject most decisively all compromise with other parties, all reversion to parliamentary forms of struggle, which have become historically and politically obsolete. . . ."

Lenin's reply is that "any Bolshevik who has consciously participated in, or has closely observed, the development of Bolshevism since 1903 will at once say after reading these arguments: What old and familiar rubbish! What 'left' childishness!"

Whether a quotation from Lenin has any value in convincing a "left" Socialist that the present policies of the Comintern are Marxian, or in proving to a liberal that they do not involve a sudden, perhaps unreliable, "change of line" will depend upon the historical aptness of this quotation. Dimitrov makes it abundantly clear that the basic line of Marxists has not changed with regard to participation in bourgeois governments. The decision will rest upon the specific possibilities in every case, and the same goes for the present Comintern policy of defending bourgeois democracy. This policy is attacked as a "betrayal" of Socialism. It is regarded suspiciously by some liberals who are shocked by the "suddenness" of the change, and think it undependable and



"Haven't I had the pleasure of firing you some time or other?"

something less than candid. To all such criticisms, the answer is simple and clear. The basic line of Marxists with respect to bourgeois democracy has not changed. When bourgeois democracy is threatened from without by reaction which seeks to destroy the whole basis of trade-union activity and the Socialist movement, Marxists come to its defense. But when the reactionaries take refuge *within* bourgeois democracy, perverting democratic forms for their own ends and to subjugate the working class, Marxists take up arms against it. Thus the Bolsheviks made war on Kerensky's provisional government because it was headed back to czarism and stood in the way of the proletarian revolution. "At the time of the October Revolution," Dimitrov explains, "the Russian Bolsheviks engaged in a life-and-death struggle against all political parties which, under the slogan of the defense of bourgeois democracy, opposed the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. The Bolsheviks fought these parties because the banner of bourgeois democracy had at that time become the standard around which all counter-revolutionary forces mobilized to challenge the victory of the proletariat." Similarly, in Germany during the epoch of capitalist stabilization, Communists fought the Weimar Republic, "not because it was a republic, but because it was a *bourgeois* republic that was engaged in crushing the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, especially in 1918-20 and in 1923." But when the Nazis began to mobilize hundreds of thousands of brownshirts to destroy working-class organizations, Communist tactics changed, and should have changed, Dimitrov admits with an openness rare in political annals, far more than they did. It is true that, as R. Palme Dutt reports, the Communist Party offered the Social Democratic Party a united front on four occasions, but this was not enough. More should have been done then, and more should be done now, in so many countries where the same threat of barbaric cruelty and repression exists.

Dimitrov quotes Lenin to the effect that, "Just as socialism cannot be victorious unless it introduces complete democracy, so the proletariat will be unable to prepare for victory over the bourgeoisie unless it wages a many-sided, consistent, and revolutionary struggle for democracy. . . ."

Even the differences between the degrees of democracy are precious matters for the Marxist bent on organizing the working class. Thus Lenin remarks in *Two Tactics,* "The bourgeois-democratic regime varies in different countries—in Germany and in England, in Austria and in America or Switzerland. He would be a fine Marxist indeed, who in a democratic revolution failed to see the difference between the nature of this or that form of it, and confined himself to 'clever' quips about this being 'a bourgeois revolution' after all, the fruits of a 'bourgeois revolution.'" Marx and Engels, no less than Lenin, appreciated the difference between degrees of democracy and the necessity of fighting for more and more of it. Their participation in the Democratic Association of 1847, with Marx as an outstanding leader, demonstrates that they were eager to promote democracy in every country and to coöperate with any proletarian or bourgeois groups who really had this end in view, just as they would cross swords with everyone who, like M. Bartels, turned out "more theocratic than democratic." On the eve of the Revolution, and the formu-

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lation of the *Communist Manifesto,* in a period of crisis and reaction, Marx saw the signal importance of increasing democracy under bourgeois governments in order to improve the wretched conditions of the workers and to free their hands in the struggle for Socialism.

The world has changed since 1847. Conditions and attitudes have been transformed. Yet the respect for genuine democracy remains the same. The full democracy which is being realized under the Stalin Constitution in the Soviet Union and even the fragmentary political privileges of bourgeois democracies are worthy of the greatest sacrifices to maintain. Just as the Democratic Association came out in defense of the democratic Protestant cantons threatened with secessionist wars and foreign intervention by reactionary powers, so Marxists today defend bourgeois democracies against the arms of fascism.

Marx's attitude toward the secessionist Civil War in the United States was the same. Bourgeois democracy was worthy of defense against slavery and reaction. In the "Address of the International Workingmen's Association to Abraham Lincoln" congratulating him on his reëlection, a document which was written by Marx, we read:

> From the commencement of the titanic American strife the workingmen of Europe felt instinctively that the star-spangled banner carried the destiny of their class. . . .
>
> The workingmen of Europe feel sure that, as the American War of Independence initiated a new era of ascendancy for the middle class, so the American anti-slavery war will do for the working classes.

The tradition of Marxism discloses a protracted struggle for genuine democracy. The Marxists who have gone to Spain do not fight because of some sudden decision of the Communist International, some "change of line," as zealous critics aver, but in fulfillment of this long tradition of progressive initiative and action for the realization of democracy and Socialism. Dimitrov's reports and speeches which delineate the vast multiformity of conditions that must be met in various countries, and define the types of strategy which are needed, should be of immense value to American workers. This is particularly true of the present volume, since in this collected form the reports supplement each other and fill out a synoptic world view. This book, in the opinion of the present reviewer, should not be read ceremonially or by rote. It should be studied and applied, with constructive imagination and resourcefulness, to the important problems which impinge most closely upon the reader.

The present review does not do justice, in any sense, to the richness and variety of this book. It has been confined to one aspect of the political line of the Communist International: flexibility, variety, and expediency of tactics combined with unswerving devotion to principle. But this is certainly a most important aspect which carries great assurance for the future.

V. J. McGILL.

Front Men for Wall Street

THE POLITICOS: 1865-1896, *by Matthew Josephson. Harcourt, Brace & Co.* $4.50.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON has written a companion volume to *The Robber Barons.* Here he tells the story of the politicians who were the front men for the lords of industry and banking, and of the parties which carried on the political struggles that camouflaged and implemented the conquest of the continent. He digs underneath what the parties and their chieftains said, and reveals what they really meant and what class interests they really served.

Such an analysis necessarily must be more subtle than mere muckraking. Josephson approaches the post-Civil War period in the light of Marx's observation in *The Eighteenth Brumaire:* ". . . in the struggles on the stage of history, we must distinguish the phrases and fancies of the political parties from their true organic entity and their genuine interest, must distinguish appearance from reality." He shows that the reality was the strengthening of big business; the appearance was the struggle between the reformers and the spoilsmen, resulting in minor reforms in patronage distribution. The plumed knights who rode forth to battle sounding the war cries of the period were fighting in behalf of the railroad cabal, the whiskey ring, the vested interests of coal, iron, textiles. In the name of the American standard of living, they passed tariffs to protect the monopolies. While "regulating" the trusts, they undermined the democratic rights of the common people—especially those of labor.

The party structures and the two-party system itself were shaped to fit the needs of expanding capitalism. The end product was the transformation of the Republican Party—the party of Lincoln and Thaddeus Stevens—into the party of Wall Street and Mark Hanna, with the Democratic Party becoming a "respectable" opposition. This became the established pattern of American political life, with no fundamental issues dividing the "ins" from the "outs." The two-party system, as Josephson says, became "reversible": one party performed unpleasant tasks and thereby earned public unpopularity, while the other party then functioned as a social safety-valve. In the words of Grover Cleveland, "a transfer of executive control from one party to another did not mean any serious disturbance of existing conditions." Thus Hayes, the Republican, and Cleveland, the Democrat, broke the great railway strikes of the Seventies and Nineties with equal fervor for property interests. Not until the crisis of the Thirties accentuated class conflicts to the breaking point, were real issues to divide the two major parties; not until then was a new political alignment to develop in the country.

John Heliker

Josephson's contribution is to trace the adjustment of the two major parties to the needs of predatory capital. They became "joint stock associations" in which the bankers and industrialists directed and managed the concerns. This meant a break with the democratic traditions of the country. We watch the change from the direct bribing of politicians to "the open marriage" of the parties to big business with campaign contributions taking on "the character of regular retainers for definite and regular, rather than occasional, political services."

The best parts of this book are the sections in which Josephson shows the plutocratization of the two-party system. Peculiarities of American politics developed and continue to the present day because this had to be done against the weight of democratic traditions, and indeed in their very name. Josephson enables us to gain new insights into the workings of the American political scene, through his account of how democratic institutions were perverted from their original purposes and turned into bulwarks of capitalism. The very legislation which an angry people pushed through against the greed of the trusts was converted into an instrument for plutocracy. Reform legislation, as Richard Olney said, became a "protection against hasty and crude legislation hostile to [vested] interests." There is an important lesson here for modern progressives. Reform cannot be dissociated from genuine concessions to the masses; otherwise, as with the anti-trust legislation of that day, it merely increases Wall Street's anti-labor weapons.

Josephson has retold the story of a period which has been buried in dull and very often misleading academic tomes. He restores such men as Blaine, Conkling, Gorman, Quay, Platt, to their proper positions in our history. They were the men who erected the political framework within which the robber barons established their fiefs and imposed capitalist controls. The grafting and venality of the politicos were the expression in politics of the conspicuous waste of capitalism. Without their services it would have been more difficult for Wall Street to secure dominance and to crush middle-class and farm protests.

The old-fashioned American notion that politics was stupid and dirty helped to conceal

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the important function of the politicos and to keep amateurs out of the field. By the end of the nineteenth century, politics in the United States was to become a field almost exclusively reserved for professionals and millionaires. Josephson effectively refutes the idea that these politicians talked much and did little. Their endless talking served their masters to good purpose. While the spellbinders distracted the country, they turned over its natural resources to the real spoilsmen—Gould, Rockefeller, Morgan, and the rest of the Wall Street gang. The politicians provided comic relief for the tragedy of capitalism, but it was at the expense of the interests of the people.

With so useful a volume, it may be carping to raise objections. But there are several defects, products of a tendency to oversimplification, which should be noted. There is the misinterpretation, or rather acceptance of the standard misinterpretation, of the Reconstruction period. Another weakness is the treatment of the labor movement and working-class politics from 1865 to 1896.

Josephson swerves from making political events a carbon copy of economic forces to portraying the political machines as being almost above classes. The first emphasis leads him to paint the radical Republicans as mere dupes of the Northern industrialists with no program for carrying through the bourgeois revolution in behalf of the freed Negro people. He actually swallows the distortions which have been written by such bourbon apologists as Dunning and Rhodes, and his analysis of Stevens and Sumner are the least satisfactory portraits in the book. The second emphasis tends to give the impression that the party bosses from 1866 to 1881 were a racketeering outfit, preying on all classes. The spoils system did not endanger capitalist control; it was a product of the open buccaneering of the post-Civil War days. As capitalism developed it was inevitable that the party system itself would be institutionalized along Wall Street lines, as Josephson himself has shown so well.

By overstressing the deeds of the political spoilsmen, Josephson neglects positive elements in the country which were then only in their formative stage, but are now emerging as fundamental factors shaping the future history of America. The labor movement was weak during this period but traditions of militancy, of industrial unionism, of organizing the unorganized, were established which were more important than many of the corrupt institutions described by Josephson. His whole treatment of labor is woefully weak, although the politicos and their masters during this very period were laying down a model of anti-unionism and reaction which is now being streamlined toward fascism by the Liberty Leaguers.

Josephson also uses inept analogies, as when he describes the Populist movement with its progressive roots and its monetary obsessions as a "peasant" protest. He incorrectly attributes its source to the "colonial" relationship of the West and the South to the industrial East. He tends to confuse "ideology" with demagogy. And in the Reconstruction section he follows Du Bois' false lead and considers the Negro freedmen as "pure proletarians."

Nonetheless, Josephson has written the best popular history of an important period in our national experience. And this is a particularly valuable contribution when fascist-minded propagandists misuse American history in order to screen their attack against democracy. The reinterpretation of our history is not a matter of academic interest, but an immediate political need. Josephson's study is a welcome addition to the growing list of progressive books showing the true traditions of America.

DAVID RAMSEY.

The Scientist Hits Back

SAVAGE SYMPHONY, *by Eva Lips. Translated from the German by Caroline Newton. Random House.* $3.

BEFORE the German universities were converted into barracks in 1933, Professor Jules Lips was honored by his countrymen as a brilliant young scientist. While Hitler had roared at his rowdies in gutter and beer-hall, the director of the Museum of Ethnology at Cologne had been busy collecting materials in nineteen countries for his books on anthropology. At the moment when ignorant Nazis were proclaiming the supremacy of the fictive Aryan race and the sublimity of the military state, Professor Lips, himself an "Aryan" and a wounded war veteran, was shattering such quackery in lectures and articles. He did not dream, as he studied the various civilizations of mankind, that in his own land was being hatched a movement to end all civilization.

What bitter irony! Eva Lips, the professor's charming and cultivated wife, could not understand why some of her friends turned pale when Hitler became Chancellor. "Hitler? I thought, puzzled. Frightful times? Why? Another Chancellor? Oh, heavens, there have been so many Chancellors! What have we to do with politics?" What, indeed? Jules and Eva Lips had worked hard and minded what they then conceived to be their own business. They were more or less conventionally liberal, devoted to science, attached to their beautiful little house in the suburbs of Cologne. Lips was a presbyter of the local evangelical community. He loved his books and his museum. He was at work on his new book, *The Savage Hits Back.* He and his wife were unobtrusively happy. What happened in Berlin was "politics." It couldn't happen to them, here: "the Rhineland is another story."

Illusions are short-lived under fascism. Overnight, museums and universities were turned into "brothels of the spirit." Scientists were now expected to be sounding boards for the barbaric yelps of the brownshirts. Ideas, like men, were coördinated under the misap-

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propriated swastika. In those early days of 1933, Lips and his wife suffered from that first rude awakening which is the fate of so many in Austria today. They were still at the stage of surprise in which it was hard to believe that organized insanity could go so far. The sole condition for survival was the willingness of the scientist to become a propaganda agent for the Third Reich by supplying data on the "Negroidization of France" and the "Racial Inferiority of non-Aryan Peoples."

The inexorable conclusion was that, "There were only two fronts of battle—for Hitler against Germany, or for Germany against Hitler." The Lipses—all honor to them—remained on the right side of the battle line with a passionate conviction which their less conscientious friends described as "indiscreet stubbornness." They said "Good morning" instead of "Heil Hitler." So Lips lost his job (it had been, in the confident parlance of the academy, a "permanent appointment") and he was replaced by a highly coördinated boob, a student of his who should long ago have flunked out. Lips was hounded by the Gestapo. He was framed. His house was raided and his books confiscated. His name was honored with Nazi hate.

That terrible year and a half under fascism has been described by Eva Lips in this very impressive book. She has told her story with dignity and intelligence and warmth. Possessing a remarkable gift for ironic phrasing and characterization, Mrs. Lips has left some memorable pictures of those obsequious nobodies who inhabit the dismal world of Nazi officialdom. One is occasionally annoyed by a certain indifference to the fate of the working class which the history of the Lipses reflects; but one is grateful for the author's glimpse into the Leipzig trial, where Dimitrov was "crowned—with immortality." Mrs. Lips does not seem to realize, however, that Dimitrov's noble defiance of the Nazi court was the most powerful historical symbol of the unity between her own revolt and the opinion of civilized humanity. But this is only an incidental limitation of the book. By concentrating on two people whom we learn to admire for their courage and integrity, *Savage Symphony* succeeds in the really difficult task of deepening our contempt for fascism.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Evasion of Challenge

FORGIVE US OUR VIRTUES, *by Vardis Fisher. Caxton Printers.* $2.50.
VARDIS FISHER: CHALLENGE TO EVASION, *by David Rein. Normandie House.* $1.50.

VARDIS FISHER is a writer of energy, courage, and resource. No sooner has he completed a tetralogy baring the spiritual travail of a sensitive child of narrow-minded frontier parents than he turns out a sprightly comedy of love, *April*. As a sideline, he has edited two volumes in the W.P.A. Writers'

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Project American Guide series. Now he offers "a comedy of evasions," *Forgive Us Our Virtues.* Work in progress includes a lengthy epic novel involving the history of the Mormons.

David Rein's essay on Fisher is soundly conceived for the most part, but, short as it is, it often gives the impression of prolixity, owing to the author's fondness for by-paths of discussion. There are indications of haste or carelessness. Fisher contributes a preface to Rein's book in which he reiterates beliefs already familiar to readers of the final volume of the tetralogy. He sees Marxism as an attempt, at least in theory, to make egoism serve the race. But "we must know a lot more about ourselves and the way the ancient past has shaped us before we dare believe that so selfless a political theory stands any chance of surviving the rampant egoism that still exists."

In *Forgive Us Our Virtues,* Fisher has assembled a typical group of maladjusted neurotics. John Smith is a bridegroom who maintains that in matrimony honesty and frankness are imperative, but of course finds it difficult—even impossible—to pursue such a course as he recommends. He winds up by going off his nut and almost slaying a high-pressure psychiatrist whom he surprises teaching his wife how to kiss as a wife should. The psychiatrist, like many another among Fisher's previous characters, is an accomplished and insatiable seducer. Jim Jones is the clear-minded psychologist who scorns the methods of go-getting practitioners and who has a lovely wife after whom most of his friends lust in vain. Ogden Greb "wanted to turn away from the patient and useless reading of books wherein every idea was like an ugly old woman in a new dress."

The conversation of these intellectuals is often freighted with such painstaking wit and studded with so many apothegms that one longs for a bit of banality or a plain, unbarbed statement now and then. For this reason, the section dealing with Jerry Young's attempt to make a living as a "psychotherapist" in a small Western town is the most convincing and entertaining in *Forgive Us Our Virtues.* Fisher possesses genuine feeling for the nuances of folk humor.

Though Fisher is an implacable foe of evasions, his last two serious novels have ended with escape to the pagan simplicity of primitive regions. In *No Villain Need Be,* Vridar Hunter, having fled to the wilds, hungered for news of the world as he hungered for his early-morning cigarette. "He wondered if this great nation, founded on principles of liberty and freedom, was yet recruiting greed and privilege into a fascist state." And Ogden Greb, in the present volume, mates with a beautiful pagan and retires to a woodland hut hewed by his own hands. Such isolationism may be pleasant, the study of psychology may eventually be the means of emancipating mankind, but if everybody tries "wondering" whether fascism is going to get us, we shall not wait long before finding out.

JACK CONROY.

The SUB SELLER

Don't be alarmed by the change of name (or did you notice it?). People do it every day. And how can we tell what we like best without trying out a few? So it's the *Sub Seller* for the WYFIPs this week. If you have a better suggestion send it along.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Artists' Congress' Second Show

"THE growing social awareness of American artists" brought the American Artists' Congress into being almost three years ago. Since its first meeting at Town Hall in February 1936, the congress has been able to exert an influence in American life far greater than its numerical size, fighting in defense of cultural agencies and values, standing shoulder to shoulder with other progressive artists' groups in the common struggle for peace and democracy. In the midst of so active an existence, esthetic values might easily be overlooked. On the contrary, the current exhibition at Wanamaker's fifth-floor picture-galleries is heartening proof that it is possible for artists to be socially aware and at the same time creatively fruitful.

Over 250 oils, water colors, prints, sculptures, and photographs make up the American Artists' Congress' second annual exhibition. A no-jury show, open to members on payment of a small entry fee to defray expenses, the exhibition provides a cross-section of contemporary American creative ability. To be sure, the academicians are not represented; but neither were they represented in the first *Salon des Refusés,* from which sprang the Impressionist movement and the whole impetus of modern art. A number of excellent painters have, indeed, absented themselves from the felicity of joining with their fellows in the defense of culture. But a greater number of excellent painters *have* joined. That is the exciting thing in viewing this exhibition and exhibitions like it: they represent not the dead acclaim of academies, not the sterile awards of museums, but the living effort of living men and women to be active, fertile contributors to their age.

The new social awareness of artists has had an interesting effect. It has opened the artists' eyes, as well as the public's, to the richness, depth, and variety of life. Not only the horrors of slums, drouth, flood, war, disease, poverty are seen with this new vision, but the more impalpable and delicate nuances of the world in which we live. In the first awakening of artists to the knowledge that they are members of society, organically one with society, *not* exiled and disfranchised outcasts, there was a sudden fervor of conversion which made the bum, the derelict, the tenement, the only proper theme for art.

That phase was a passing one, and one through which artists seem to have made a safe voyage. It is clear now that everything about us is the product of the interplay of social forces and ideas, that every tangible object tells its story of social progress or decay. Not only the objective perceptions of social meaning are significant, but also the subjective factors. As artists have become more experienced in their social functions, they have reached out in all directions, broadened and enhanced definitions. The results are to be seen in the exhibition.

It is no longer taboo, for example, to paint a landscape. The taboo operates with regard to the spirit in which the picture is painted, not with regard to its theme. Similarly, one may point a picture in which there are no human figures, and the result need not be anti-social. In other words, art has weathered its necessary period of over-simplification and passed on to a more realistic and complex understanding of its own possibilities. The broader attitude is revealed in the fact that an able group of paintings in the exhibition are abstractions. Another indication of this riper and more advanced conception is that, at least among the painters, there is a greater richness and interest in the painting itself. This is a healthy sign; for, as the writer has had occasion to say frequently, the most impeccable social intentions do not make a good picture alone, technical expression must be wedded indivisibly with conceptual content.

Healthy, also, is the fact that the exhibition is being held in a big modern American department store, instead of in a dingy hired hall or in an even drearier museum. Art wants to reach the people, artists say. Certainly people move in and out of stores, railroad and bus terminals, skyscraper foyers, as they never do in the more conventional and academic of art institutions. Art is a useful public service, artists declare. The artist is worthy of his hire. Holding the exhibition at Wanamaker's gives these abstract truths reality. For the intelligence of this choice and for the constantly rising level of quality of its exhibitions, the American Artists' Congress deserves sincere congratulations.

Painting by Tschacbasov (American Artists' Congress)
High Command

THE ONE-MAN EXHIBITION of paintings by Judson Briggs, on view at the Uptown Gallery during the month, is a concrete example of how artists are putting their social awareness to work. Briggs left the easel division of the Federal Art Project to go to Spain for the Medical Bureau. Of his ten months there, eight were in front-line and other ambulance service and two months of leave were devoted to painting. The canvases shown represent, however, only a part of the work he did in Madrid; for as he was leaving Spain, his paintings suffered the fate thousands of Spanish people have known, they were struck by a bomb and many of them destroyed. Enough survive to make the show interesting and significant, as may be deduced from the fact that the work was exhibited both in Madrid and in Paris. It is being shown here under the auspices of the Medical Bureau and the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy.

The quality of Briggs' work is romantic and direct. Before his Spanish war service, he had held one-man exhibitions here and had exhibited in group shows. The Ryder-esque attributes of his style were commented on then. This deep, brooding sense is still to be felt, and logically, since it is a harmonious expression of his subject-matter—the ravaged and devastated land of Spain. To evoke vigorous protest against the horror of war is the function of such art. Within the terms of his definition Briggs does this. As he continues his advance along the path of social art, it will be interesting to observe if the romantic preoccupation yields to a more documented and realistic method. ELIZABETH NOBLE.

Political Satire and Shaw Revival

IMAGINE if you will the street-corner scene when a dozen or more boys decide to play stickball. They gather in the center of the New York pavement, armed with the broomhandle which is to serve as a bat. Two captains are chosen, and then begins the

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rhythmic process of shimmying the stick. Fist upon fist to a magic rhyme:

> Mister Goldberg lost his hat
> Skigetty skigetty skigetty scat!
> One, two—one, two. . . .

And the winner begins to choose sides.

Apparently John Boroff and Walter Hart, playwrights of *Washington Jitters,* the satiric novel of politics written by Dalton Trumbo, never played stickball. True, they wish to lambast bureaucratic politicians. True, they choose to awaken American voters to their elementary responsibility, which is to check closely the actions of elected and appointed office-holders. In general, they must have had in mind a progressive play, one which would find support among audiences of the liberal and working-class organizations.

But Messrs. Boroff and Hart, as well as the forward-looking members of the Actors' Repertory Company have come a cropper. They have failed to choose sides, with the result that the play at the Guild Theatre is not only weak and ineffectual; it is, in certain scenes, politically vicious.

The tale, told in a mildy comic manner, is of a sign-painter, one Henry Hogg, who accicentally becomes, in the public mind, an official of one of the "alphabet agencies" of the New Deal. Mr. Hogg is nothing of the sort. He merely sat at a "coördinator's" desk one day when a bright-eyed columnist passed by, and when he blasted the administration, the scandal-monger splashed the story all over the front pages. As a result, Mr. Hogg, naïve, vaguely libertarian, and certainly an opportunist, develops into a prodigious newspaper story. The New Deal and the opposition, impersonated by caricatures of Jim Farley and Senator Borah, woo him hotly. When a ghost writer sells Hogg the idea of signing his name to a book which the false "coördinator" has neither written nor read, Hogg becomes a best-selling author whose approval is sought for an important administration measure. The rest of the story is sheer farce save for the climax, in which Hogg cries for a plague on politicians of every shade of Washington thought.

Even in its present mild and emasculated form, *Washington Jitters* is a muddled and sometimes dangerously anti-progressive play. It contains no measure of appreciation for the humanitarian aspects of the New Deal program. Nepotism, flagrant graft, cynicism, and downright ignorance are the qualities of the Democratic politicians presented by the authors. The off-stage "Fireside," obviously the President, is a stooge for the patronage-dispensing "Mahafferty" (Farley) and is a coward who goes fishing whenever a difficult problem besets his administration. The goal toward which our minds are directed is of an America in which this "little man," Henry Hogg, will become the standard-bearer in 1940 of the united Republican-Democratic forces.

At best, criticism of bureaucracy in politics is a stale and outworn dramatic subject. The impending realignment of forces, in anticipation of the struggle to establish a democratic front in the United States, broadens not only the political perspective but the dramatic scene as well. Even if Messrs. Hart and Boroff had written a good play—which they decidedly have not—they would have gone aground in shallow waters.

Today it is the reactionary who supports the cry: "A plague on both your houses!" When the Roosevelt administration falls into the very same position of self-chosen neutrality, it is at its weakest. There is no middle road in politics today. The tories attempt to lure unsuspecting liberals into their camp with the cry, "Neutrality—fair-mindedness—*au-dessus de la bataille!*" Almost into this camp have strayed Boroff, Hart, and their associates of the Actors' Repertory Company, unsuspectingly, of course.

Another mild affair is *Eye to the Sparrow,* at the Vanderbilt. Milton Selser's comedy is about a Social Registerite *grande dame* and her family who take the economic tailspin. Chief interest in the play for those of leftist persuasion is the characterization of the Communist girl with whom Sonnie Boy falls in love. She is sympathetically limned and, for a brief moment, places the tale on an even keel. But God watches over the Thomases, and what chance Mr. Selser's little theme had of developing into a meaty affair withers away. Ma marries a judge, Polly spends the night with a rich man but returns to the legalized arms of the rising young lawyer, and Sonny Boy, who fell for the Red, walks out on her when he discovers that she spends her nights not in sin but with a committee, discussing improvements to be made on old Mother Earth.

CHARLES E. DEXTER.

Recently Recommended Plays

Prologue to Glory (Maxine Elliott, N. Y.). Federal Theatre production of E. P. Conkle's play about Lincoln's early life, the affair with Ann Rutledge, and his first steps away from the life of the New Salem country store.

Haiti (Lafayette, N. Y.). Rex Ingram plays the lead in this stirring tale of how one of Toussaint L'Overture's generals foiled Napoleon's attempt to restore slavery in Haiti.

One-third of a Nation (Adelphi, N. Y.). The current issue of The Living Newspaper, headlining the lack of adequate housing for President Roosevelt's 33 1-3 percent, and emphasizing the need for action. Thoroughly documented, witty, and admirably produced.

IN 1921 the youthful and enterprising Theatre Guild of that day presented an appreciative New York with Shaw's *Heartbreak House,* begun before the war and then not produced in England. At that time Shaw's disquisition on the bankruptcy of "leisured, cultured England before the war," its "utter enervation and futilization," was both relevant and piquant. Today, on the occasion of the Mercury Theatre's revival, his phrases retain their pungency

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and acuteness, but the play weighs somewhat heavily on an audience to whom the heresies of 1920 are not an adequate substitute for more theatrical values. Either Shaw's ideas have already been accepted, in which case we take them too much for granted to be startled by them, or rejected, in which case they no longer appall us; in any case, disputation, however witty, when pursued to the lengths which Shaw wanders on in *Heartbreak House,* becomes tedious. The master of pamphlet drama would be doing himself a favor if he permitted, in fact encouraged, cutting his scripts, instead of categorically forbidding the omission of a single line.

In the lashing which Shaw administers to a decadent English bourgeoisie there is clear evidence of Socialist understanding. The story of Ellie Dunn's romantic disillusionment and subsequent hard-headed maturity is the main thread on which Shaw strings one demonstration after another of the fraudulence of human behavior, the corruption of human relationships and values in a society governed by the cash nexus and drifting towards annihilation because of its own confusion and lethargy. But it is no less typical of the Fabian evasion of the necessity of certain dynamic social developments and upheavals that he leaves his characters facing a future of air-raids and catastrophe, with only withering comment on their bravado and stupidity. *Heartbreak House* already contains the seeds of a confusion which has run wild in the topsy-turvy anarchism of *Too True to Be Good, The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles,* and other recent plays.

Shaw's sincere admiration for Chekhov is evident in his attempt to bend to his own uses the Russian master's dramatic technique. But Chekhov's subtle style, the perfect expression and perfect instrument for depicting a particular class with an emotional and intellectual character all its own, does not lend itself to Anglo-Saxon characters engaged in an intellectual controversy. The result, dramatically, is confusion confounded and, in Orson Welles' production at least, a definite impression of burlesque. Perhaps, again, this is a result of time. Today, ensconced in our tabloid theatrical realism, we are apt to find even Chekhov faintly ridiculous unless played with consummate deftness and understanding. But one is inclined to blame Shaw nevertheless for forcing an unsuitable style upon his particular type of thinking. The players at the Mercury are confronted with all the technical difficulties of a Chekhovian play for American actors without anything in the way of spiritual content or reality of character to sustain them in their wanderings about the stage, their aimless entrances and exits and long drawn out monologues. The result is a mechanically peripatetic production; and yet what alternative is there? If they sat still too long, particularly in the interminable second act, they might really fall asleep, and so might the audience! George Coulouris comes off best as Boss Mangan, a bitingly sardonic characterization on

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which Shaw has lavished his powers of ridicule. Mady Christians gives a brilliant performance as Mrs. Hushabye, a role which is trying in its lack of direction and which she masters by the sheer verve of her personality and the tempered skill of a Continentally trained actress. ELEANOR FLEXNER.

The *Potemkin* Once More

FUNNY thing about the Soviet film industry: they've stopped making B pictures. The last half-dozen cans to come from the shelves of Amkino have been first rate pictures and two of them great pictures. *Young Pushkin, The Ballad of The Cossack Golota, Ski Battalion, Peter the First, Lenin in October,* and now, *Lonely White Sail,* are impressive evidence that, while Hollywood's topless towers are cracking at the seams, the Russians have something sane and solid.

The new exhibit at the Cameo is from Valentin Katayev's novel and screen story of the aftermath of the revolt on the imperial armored cruiser *Potemkin,* in the harbor of Odessa in 1905. Two small boys, Gavrik, the fisherman, and Petia, son of a schoolteacher, become involved in shielding from czarist spies, a fugitive sailor named Zhukov.

Gavrik, a towhead with innocent blue eyes and plenty of guile, forestalls the Czar's officers until the revolutionary committee is besieged in one of the clifflike apartments along the bluffs of the Black Sea; then his bourgeois playmate, Petia, who loves to declaim Lermontov, becomes a little soldier of the revolution. Gavrik is the local master of the alley game called "lugs," in which a metal lug is thrown at a row of buttons; a button is won when it is made to jump into the air. Gavrik has victimized the tyro, Petia, to the point where the boy is hopelessly in debt.

The czarist forces have isolated and surrounded the besieged revolutionists, who are running out of ammunition. Gavrik tries to take some bullets through to them, but the guards stop him. He goes to Petia, who wears the cadets' uniform of the high school, and forces him to become his slave for the bad debt. He fills the unsuspecting Petia's knapsack with bullets and sees him through the lines and into a backstairs approach to the revolutionist's position. The workers are forced to retreat over rooftops, dragging Petia along. After a day of guerrilla fighting on rooftops, Petia, dazed and dirty, goes back home. He walks in on a pretty nursery party for his kid brother's birthday. Petia lies on his bed, near hysteria, when his father starts to discipline him for stripping all the buttons of the household. The father takes two sacks of bullets from his knapsack and, thinking they are lugs, throws them in the stove, despite Petia's horrified warning. The stovelids blow off and noodles drip from the ceiling as Petia faints.

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★ "REDS" AT WORK

The Communist Party holds its National Convention in New York this week. Ruth McKenny tells, informally and authentically, who they are, what they do, how they work.

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ANALYSIS OF THE NEWS OF THE WEEK every Sunday night, 8:30 p. m. Workers School, 2nd floor, 35 East 12th Street. Admission, 20c.

NEW MASSES LECTURE: "American Literary Scene—1938," by Granville Hicks, Wed., May 18, 8:30 p. m. Steinway Hall, 113 West 57th St.

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The dramatic contrasts of these two episodes are handled with subtlety and suspense.

Two Moscow schoolboys play the leads. Under the direction of V. Legoshin, they prove again how effective honest child-portraits can be in the films. Alexander Melnikov, who was the memorable sailor of *Baltic Deputy,* repeats as Zhukov of the *Potemkin.*

The picture begins slowly but the climaxes are taken with gripping suspense. Not only are Petia and Gavrik real kids but they convey class implications as well. The bright, sensitive schoolmaster's boy, typical of the best of the middle class, and Gavrik, the resourceful, tough working-class kid, work in harmony to aid the revolution. Don't miss this film.

DISNEY'S NEW SUBJECT, *Lonesome Ghosts,* playing at the Music Hall, is his best caprice since *Mickey, the Magician.* Four blasé phantoms, whose noses are red from a hard winter of hitting the bottle, see an announcement in the paper that Mickey, Donald, and Pluto the Pup have opened a ghost-extermination agency. They lure the exterminators to the haunted house and the Disney antics begin. A new surrealist sense of humor appears, a pictorial *non sequitur* as crazy as the prose of S. J. Perelman. The ghosts are the shades of departed burlesque comedians with green derbies, loony smiles, and a fiendish inventiveness in harassing our little friends. Donald is chasing one of the spooks who dives through the floor, leaving a jagged hole. As Donald pulls up short, the floor miraculously becomes whole, changes into a pool of water; the ghost comes to the surface in a bathing suit, blows a stream of water in Donald's face, and, holding his nose, goes down into the water, and the water becomes floor again. I blame this marvelous stuff on the college-comics editors Disney has been hiring of late.

Supporting Mickey Mouse at the Music Hall is a farce called *Joy of Living* with Irene Dunne and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. Gene Towne and Graham Baker, the gagsters, have robbed a lot of comedy graves to assemble these dry bones. The funniest scene is one of Miss Dunne getting plastered in a German beer garden, which may give you an idea how fresh the rest of it is. Aside to Messrs. Towne and Baker: I think that quacking noise is funny when delivered by Donald Duck but not when it is rendered by Fairbanks, Jr.

If anyone should bring to town another French drama about czarist Russia, I promise my readers a noble silence. *Moscow Nights,* the newest of the *genre,* at the Fifth Avenue Playhouse, differs from *The Volga Boatman* and *Dark Eyes* in that Harry Baur instead of Vanel of the Comédie Française is the drunken bourgeois, floundering around in his private room with a gypsy orchestra. Annabella, since a victim of the Hollywood snatch racket, and Pierre-Richard Willm, the Alpine guide of *Un Carnet de Bal,* are the girl and the handsome-officer-unjustly-accused-of-treason, respectively.

JAMES DUGAN.

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VALE VALE WYFIPs*

Whipcracker Charlie sums up Sub drive and gives some hints for Summer

WELL, friends, there'll be no diploma for Charlie at this WYFIP Commencement. We didn't quite make the 5000 grade. The final figure is just 4721.

Aside from the little letdown of not making 100 per cent on the quota we set, I think that's a damn good showing. Do you know any other magazine in the country whose readers work for it like that? Does it make you proud to belong to such a gang? Are you glad to be a WYFIP?

(Pause for applause, cheers, and shouts of "Sure sure!")

You can prove it by carrying on. Get those 279 new subs first and finish up this 5000 job. Then check up on the friends you WYFIPed into subscribing. See how they're liking the magazine by now. Remind them about renewing, and this time make it a year.

Then work on the people you meet this summer. If you think they'd like NEW MASSES, get them to read it. I admit you'll meet some that are hopeless. But then I remember how I seemed thataway myself a summer or so ago, till That Girl Charline (*see page 26*) opened my eyes to the facts of life by making me read NEW MASSES.

The World Moves ALL Summer

So don't let up (or do I mean down) this summer. Remember the world moves on through June, July and August, even as in December. Where it moves to depends on how many of us go off into a vacuum and call it a vacation. Avoid the vacuum wherever you go for NEW MASSES America's *indispensable* weekly is going places too!

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Timely Topics

More good things on the fire than can be announced definitely this far ahead. Need I remind you of the clearcut editorial comment and timely reports by correspondents all over the world that give you a dependable *key to the week's world news?* Or of the reviews of new books, plays, films, that a well-informed person wants to know about on or off his vacation?

With that ammunition for the summer, here goes the ghost of Charlie Crawfut—but I'll keep my good left eye on you through Charline's column inside. I've told her how *responsive* you were so don't let her down, will youse?

Yours lately, but no longer,

Charlie Crawfut

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